

**THE DAVIDIC SHEPHERD AS DIVINE KING  
IN THE NEW JERUSALEM**

**JOHN'S USE OF EZEKIEL 34:23–24, 37:24–25, AND 40–48 IN REVELATION 21–22**

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SOUTH HAMILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF THEOLOGY IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

BY

AARON OSTERBROCK

AUGUST 15, 2016

## ABSTRACT

This study will examine the relationship between Ezekiel and Revelation when it comes to the portrayal of the Divine Presence in the eschatological holy city labeled respectively by each, “The Lord is There” or the “New Jerusalem.” John not only borrows frequently from the final vision of Ezekiel (Ezek 40-48) to describe his final vision (Rev 21-22), but he alludes to Ezekiel throughout the Apocalypse. John’s allusions often add significance to Ezekiel’s initial meaning. The most substantial example of this is found in John’s treatment of the Ezekielian Davidic Shepherd (Ezek 34, 37, cf. 44-46). John demonstrates Jesus to be the Davidic Shepherd as well as the Divine Presence. John, in the same vein as Ezekiel, also portrays the Divine Presence as King throughout Revelation, especially in his final vision of the fully inaugurated Kingdom. The combining of John’s portrayal of the Davidic Shepherd as the Divine Presence, through Jesus, and the Divine Presence as King results in the main argument of this thesis: the Davidic Shepherd is Divine King in the New Jerusalem.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS.....	iv
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. JOHN’S USE OF EZEKIEL IN REVELATION .....	3
1.1 Literature Review .....	3
1.2 Methodology.....	5
1.3 A Clarification on Terminology.....	7
1.4 The Prophetic Self-Identity of Ezekiel and John.....	8
1.5 Summary and Thesis.....	13
2. JESUS AS THE DAVIDIC SHEPHERD AND THE DIVINE PRESENCE.....	15
2.1 Jesus as the Messiah, the Davidic Shepherd.....	15
2.1.1 Setting the Framework.....	15
2.1.2 OT Background: The Davidic Shepherd and King.....	15
2.1.3 The Davidic Shepherd in Ezekiel.....	18
2.1.4 Jesus’ Attestation that He is the Messiah, the Davidic Shepherd.....	20
2.1.5 John’s Declaration of Jesus as Messiah through Allusions to Ezekiel .....	23
2.2 Jesus as the Divine Presence.....	26
2.2.1 Overlapping Roles in Ezekiel.....	26
2.2.2 Jesus attests to His Deity.....	28
2.2.3 Portrayal of Jesus as the Divine Presence in Revelation.....	30
2.3 Summary and Conclusions.....	32
3. THE DIVINE PRESENCE AS KING.....	34
3.1 Setting the Framework for the Portrayal of the Divine Presence as King.....	34
3.2 OT Background for Ezekiel’s View of the Divine Presence as King.....	35

3.3 The Divine Presence as King in Ezekiel and Revelation.....	39
3.3.1 Ezekiel and John's Visions of the Throne Room.....	39
3.3.2 The Consistent Image of the Throne throughout Revelation.....	42
3.3.3 The Marking of Foreheads.....	45
3.3.4 For the sake of My Name.....	47
3.3.5 The Divine King as the Ultimate Judge of the Nations.....	48
3.4 Summary and Conclusions.....	55
4. THE DIVINE KING IN THE NEW JERUSALEM.....	57
4.1 The Relationship between Ezekiel 40–48 and Revelation 21–22.....	57
4.1.1 The Beginning of the Final Prophecies of Ezekiel and John.....	59
4.2 The Divine King Tabernacling Among His Peoples in the New Jerusalem.....	61
4.3 Descriptions of the New Jerusalem.....	66
4.3.1 Taking Measurements.....	66
4.3.2 Precious Jewels that Connect John with Ezekiel and Point to Eden.....	67
4.3.3 Restrictions within the City.....	69
4.3.4 A Change in the Landscape: The Divine Presence as the Temple.....	70
4.4 The Davidic Shepherd as Divine King in the New Jerusalem.....	75
4.4.1 Royal Terminology in Ezekiel and Revelation.....	75
4.4.2 Location Shift of the Throne.....	78
4.4.3 The Throne Room.....	84
4.4.4 The Throne and the Temple are One.....	86
4.4.5 The River of Life Flowing from the Throne and the Temple.....	87
4.4.6 The Davidic Shepherd on the Throne of the Lord in the New Jerusalem.....	88
4.5 Summary and Conclusions.....	89

5. CONCLUSION: THE DAVIDIC SHEPHERD AS DIVINE KING	
IN THE NEW JERUSALEM.....	91
5.1 A Chapter by Chapter Summary of this Thesis.....	91
5.2 Implications.....	95
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	100
VITA.....	105

## ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Anchor Bible Commentary
<i>AUSS</i>	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Bible Quarterly Monograph Series
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
<i>IBS</i>	<i>Irish Biblical Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
NAC	New American Commentary
NIGTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
PTMS	Princeton Theological Monograph Series
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>

## INTRODUCTION

This study asserts that John's intentional use of Ezekiel, through numerous allusions, portrays the Davidic Shepherd of Ezekiel as the Divine King in the New Jerusalem. In regards to the New Jerusalem, John expands on Ezekiel's prophecy of the eschatological holy city (Ezekiel 40–48) through showing that the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy has taken place in Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. The only way that one can say that an eschatological prophecy has been fulfilled even though it hasn't fully happened yet is that the Divine Presence is transcendent. The prophecy has been fulfilled and the New Jerusalem is on its way. It is only humanity who will be surprised by the timing of its arrival. When it comes, as John portrays, it will usher in the complete reign of God over His people as the Divine King comes to dwell with all of creation forever.

After an introductory section discussing methodology and prophetic self-identity, I will divide the study into two parts: (1) John's use of Ezekiel to show the Davidic Shepherd as Divine King prior to the vision of the New Jerusalem in Rev 21–22 and (2) John's use of Ezekiel to depict the reign of the Davidic Shepherd as Divine King in the New Jerusalem.

The first part of this study will focus on John's allusions to Ezekiel and his continuing in the theology of Ezekiel prior to the New Jerusalem vision. I will analyze John's assertion that Jesus is the Messiah, showing that John's description includes, and makes references to, the promised Davidic Shepherd given to Ezekiel. I will then look at John's portrayal of the Divine Presence, especially in connection with Ezekiel's visions. In the third chapter I will examine the Divine Presence as King, a portrayal that shapes the visions of both Ezekiel and John, who often alludes to Ezekiel in his portrayal of

kingship. This portrayal is developed long before either comes to his concluding visions of the eschatological holy city. Some of the places where John draws on Ezekiel do not contain enough similar significant words to argue for an intentional allusion. These connections, however, are still meaningful in that they show where John is continuing in the theological tradition of Ezekiel, both of whom fit into the larger theological tradition of the Bible. These allusions and theological connections that John makes to Ezekiel frame the picture of the New Jerusalem displayed in the last two chapters of Revelation.

The second part of our study will focus on how Ezekiel, in Ezekiel 40–48, and John, in Revelation 21–22, both depict the Divine King in the New Jerusalem, as well as how John uses and extends Ezekiel's language within John's own vision to demonstrate the reign of the Davidic Shepherd, Jesus, as the Divine King.

Through the analysis of the theological similarities, the significant number of allusions that John makes to Ezekiel, and the eschatological overlap of both of their concluding visions, a picture of the Divine Presence portrayed in Revelation through an Ezekielian lens will emerge. It is a portrait that Ezekiel develops but that John brings further into focus: the Davidic Shepherd reigning as Divine King in the midst of his people forever.



## CHAPTER ONE: JOHN'S USE OF EZEKIEL IN REVELATION

### 1.1 – Literature Review

This study stands on the shoulders of many excellent endeavors to analyze how John uses the Old Testament in Revelation. Questions have sprung forth regarding John's intentionality,<sup>1</sup> the meaning inherent in an allusion or citation,<sup>2</sup> and the proper method(s) for interpreting the text,<sup>3</sup> among others. Regarding Ezekiel, the prevailing questions seem

---

<sup>1</sup> The majority of recent scholarship has viewed John as intentionally referencing or alluding to OT texts, including the basis for the following studies: G.K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*, JSNTSup 166 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation JSNTSup 115* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); Jan Fekkes III, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and their Development*, JSNT 93 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994); G.K. Beale and Sean McDonough, "Revelation," *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); Jean-Pierre Ruiz, *Ezekiel in the Apocalypse: The Transformation of Prophetic Language in Revelation 16:17–19:10* (European University Studies 23; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989); J.M. Vogelgesang, "The Interpretation of Ezekiel in the Book of Revelation" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1985); David Mathewson, *A New Heaven and a New Earth: The Meaning and Function of the Old Testament in Revelation 21.1–22.5*, JSNTSup 238 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003); Pilchan Lee, *The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation: A Study of Revelation 21–22 in the Light of its Background in Jewish Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001); G.K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984). Bauckham also makes this claim (Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993], 4. The opposing opinion is that John is using the similar language to the OT because it was the language most familiar to him and in which he was immersed. The appearance of the OT phrases was just the "garb" with which to dress NT theology. See L.A. Vos, *The Synoptic Traditions in the Apocalypse* (Kampen: Kok, 1965), 51–52; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 135–136.

<sup>2</sup> This debate has been mainly held between Beale and Moyise, with Paulien moderating at one point. Beale argues that the meaning of the OT text alluded to by John remains intact but gains new significance. See G.K. Beale, "Questions of Authorial Intent, Epistemology, and Presuppositions and Their Bearing on the Study of the Old Testament in the New: A Rejoinder to Steve Moyise," *IBS* 21 [1999]: 151–180; G.K. Beale, "A Response to Jon Paulien on the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *AUSS* 39 [2001]: 22–33. Moyise argues for an intertextuality approach where the reader chooses from a cacophony of voices as to what the intended meaning is. See Steve Moyise, "The Old Testament in the New: A Reply to Greg Beale," *IBS* 21 (May 1999): 54–58.

<sup>3</sup> J.P. Ruiz favors a reader response method in which meaning is derived from the interpreting subject to the extent that the reader delves into dialogue with John (Ruiz, *Ezekiel in the Apocalypse*). Moyise, as mentioned above, follows an intertextuality method: he believes that the voice of the original author, the voice of the current author, and, if different, the voice of the one speaking the phrase all interact to form range of meaning. He believes that it is the job of the interpreter to choose the meaning from within this range. It is, therefore, a method similar to Ruiz but sets stricter limitations (Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation*). Beale, as also mentioned above, interprets through the Historical-Critical method believing that the original meaning of the text pulls through in the allusion but is given new significance (see Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*). These three models are followed in many different facets of subsequent studies. The methodology of Fekkes (*Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation*) and Bauckham (*Climax of Prophecy and Theology*) are similar to Beale's.

to be: what is one to do with the temple that Ezekiel sees, and is Ezek 40–48 eschatological?<sup>4</sup>

This study will proceed on the following assumptions: John was intentionally recalling the OT texts that he alludes to and does so seeing himself in the line of the prophets as well as at the culmination of biblical prophecy now that Jesus the Messiah is come.<sup>5</sup> The meaning of an OT text that John alludes to does not have its inherent meaning changed but it is brought forward and gains new application or significance in John's usage of it. Though a reader's response method allows for interesting dynamics to come into play, the inherent danger of the method is that the text becomes what the reader wants it to be instead of what the author intended and what it meant to his intended audience at the time that it was written. John interprets OT prophecy in light of the

---

<sup>4</sup> The question of how one interprets the temple is dependent on one's overall view of whether or not the last vision of Ezekiel (Ezek 40–48) is eschatological in nature. Those who believe it to be eschatological are: Beale (G.K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, NSBT 17 [Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004], 346–47); Stuart (Stuart, *Ezekiel*, 367); Dumbrell (William Dumbrell, *Search for Order: Biblical Eschatology in Focus* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994], 105); Bauckham (Bauckham, *Theology*, 132–33); Craigie (Peter C. Craigie, *Ezekiel* [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983], 275); Lee (Lee, *The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation*, 14); Cooper believes it to be eschatological, but the temple is the millennial temple during the millennium in which the saints will reign with Christ (Lamar Eugene Cooper Sr., *Ezekiel*, NAC [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994], 353. Odell does not decide as she believes the text to be ambiguous (Margaret S. Odell, *Ezekiel* [Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005], 481. Blenkinsopp should likely be in the same classification as Odell as he doesn't claim it as a program to be implemented but sees it as idealistic. He shows awareness to its connection to Revelation 21–22 but does not opine whether or not he agrees with its use there (Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel* [Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990], 193–199). Those who believe Ezek 40–48 is not eschatological are: Block (Daniel I. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, NICOT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 503–505); Leslie Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48*, WBC Vol.29 (Dallas, Word Books, 1990), 214 states that “readers will find themselves embarrassed by these chapters” and calls the idea of Ezek 40–48 being eschatological “desperate expedient that sincerely attempts to preserve belief in an inerrant prophecy.” Greenberg, “Design”, 208, quoted by Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, VTSup 56 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 141, states, “Wherever Ezekiel's program can be checked against subsequent events it proves to have had no effect.” Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, 141–42 rejects an eschatological view as well and states, “The purpose of the document was rather to encourage repentance, faithfulness and hope among its immediate hearers in exile...If these messages were heeded by Ezekiel's hearers then his vision of a future with transformed leadership structures more than served its purpose.” While Duguid softens Greenberg's critique, he still points to Ezekiel giving the people what amounts to false hope. If a prophet's prophecy does not come to pass, then he or she is a false prophet (Deut 18:20–22). Either Ezekiel is a false prophet or his prophecy has yet to come to its fulfillment.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Bauckham, *Theology*, 4.

resurrected Messiah in whom all promises and prophecies have been fulfilled.<sup>6</sup> The promises of the OT prophets have been fulfilled by the transcendent Lord; this is how the model of prophecy-fulfillment is viable – because God is outside of time and the end has already been established. Ezekiel was not writing a plan to be implemented in the post-exilic era but a vision to be communicated to the people of God of what the end of the world will look like. This study will point to the manifold allusions that John makes to Ezekiel in describing his similar vision of the end as it is revealed to him by Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, with the intention of highlighting John's allusions to the Davidic Shepherd and placement of him as the Divine King in the New Jerusalem.

## 1.2 – Methodology

It should be stated from the outset of this study that John makes allusions to many places in Scripture. Ezekiel is not alone in being used by John; he makes references including, but not limited to, Genesis, Exodus, 1 Kings, Daniel, Isaiah, Zechariah, Jeremiah, and the Psalms. Though Ezekiel is not unique in John's selecting of Scripture, the thesis of this paper is that John's use of Ezekiel, which has a prevalent theme of the kingship of God, makes a significant contribution to John's own view of the kingship of God, which is one of John's central themes, made evident from the recurring symbol of the throne. More specifically, not only does Ezekiel's view of kingship affect John, but *who* it is that Ezekiel portrays as king: the Davidic Shepherd. John expands on Ezekiel's view of the Davidic Shepherd by showing him to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ and,

---

<sup>6</sup> Cf. 2 Cor 1:20.

therefore, not only the promised Davidic King<sup>7</sup> who is to rule by God's authority but the Divine King who is to rule over all of creation in the New Jerusalem.

In this study, I will reference both Greek and Hebrew in evaluating John's use of Ezekiel and the allusions made therein. I do so standing in the line of Beale, among others, who believes that John himself used both Hebrew and Greek sources in the composition of his Apocalypse and felt free to make changes to them where appropriate.<sup>8</sup>

The terminology for classifying an allusion in this study will come from Beale. He proposes three terms be used: *clear allusion*, which has nearly identical wording, a similar meaning, and is unique to Ezekiel; *probable allusion*, which has some overlap in wording, a similar meaning, and is unique to Ezekiel; and *possible allusion*, which has a significant word or concept that echoes Ezekiel.<sup>9</sup> I will italicize these terms throughout the study to demonstrate that a technical term is being employed. For the majority of the study, the focus will be on the allusions that meet the criteria of *clear allusions*.

When approaching a study on the use of the OT in the New, one must ask: why is the New Testament author alluding to this OT passage? What is his intention? This study

---

<sup>7</sup> As the one promised by God to come from David's line is depicted by Ezekiel as being a shepherd who will rule over the people of God and also as a servant who will be king, I will use the terms Davidic Shepherd, Davidic King, and Davidic Servant interchangeably throughout this paper with the understanding that all three find themselves located in the same referent.

<sup>8</sup> G.K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament*, 62. Beale cites Moyise (Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament*, 17), as well as pointing out that this conclusion was already made 170 years ago with the work of Moses Stuart (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, II [Andover: Allen, Morrell & Wardwell; New York: M.H. Newman, 1845], 231–32).

Beale also dedicates an article to demonstrating that the solecisms found in Revelation are implemented intentionally by John to signal OT allusions. See G.K. Beale, "Solecisms in the Apocalypse as Signals for the Presence of Old Testament Allusions: A Selective Analysis of Revelation 1–22," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, JSNTSup 148 [eds. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1997]: 420–446).

<sup>9</sup> See Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament*, 62. Beale's method has been chosen with these allusions adequately meeting Hays' seven tests of hearing echoes (Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989], 29–32.) and Porter's comments on clearly defining terminology, in regards to allusions, registered (Stanley Porter, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament: A Brief Comment on Method and Terminology," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, JSNTSup 148 [eds. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1997]: 79–96. ).

will proceed with the perspective that John intentionally alludes to Ezekiel to do the following: (1) demonstrate Christ as the fulfillment of the Davidic Shepherd of whom Ezekiel speaks as well as the fulfillment of other prophecies that Ezekiel makes; (2) display the richness of the sovereignty of God that the image that John portrays of the Divine Presence is historically rooted (as well as eternally rooted); (3) meet Ezekiel's description of the kingship of God with further detail, especially when it comes to Jesus as the Divine Presence; (4) encourage his brothers and sisters living in exile as followers of Jesus under harsh Roman rule, just as Ezekiel's message encouraged the people of God living under the harsh rule of the Babylonian Empire, that the Divine Presence is the true King and that, ultimately, all the kingdoms of this world will cease to exist but his kingdom and his reign alone. With the interrelatedness of these themes, it may not be too far a stretch to suggest that John has each of these in mind as he alludes to Ezekiel. They, at least, form the framework for the basis of his methodology in referring to Ezekiel.

### **1.3 – A Clarification on Terminology**

In this study, I will often utilize the title “Divine Presence” for God. My reasoning for doing so is that I want to use a phrase that can be employed in both Ezekiel and John and be accurate to each one's view of God. For the purposes of this study, “Divine Presence” will allow me to use the same term to speak of Ezekiel's view of God, which was certainly singular, and John's view of God, which, through the revelation that comes in Jesus Christ, would have been triune (though he would have never used this phrase). The Divine Presence will allow for a smooth transition from Ezekiel to John as the triune God has not changed but, through his granted revelation, man's view of him has.

### 1.4 – The Prophetic Self-Identity of Ezekiel and John

Ezekiel and John, though they prophesied almost seven centuries apart, have significant overlap in their prophetic self-identity. They are both Jewish followers of the Lord who are well versed in Scripture when the Lord chooses to give them visions. Both also find themselves in exile and neither for things that he himself has done wrong. Ezekiel is a priest and prophet of God who was taken to Babylon in 597 B.C. due to the sins of the Kingdom of Judah and its violation of the Mosaic covenant for over 300 years. John, on the other hand, is a disciple of the Lord and tells us that he was in exile on the island of Patmos “because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 1:9 NASB).<sup>10</sup> It is not the sins of the people of God that have led John there but, most likely, the Roman government at a provincial level. Both John and Ezekiel, therefore, are under the rule of secular kingdoms, but this does not prevent either of them from continually pointing to the kingship of the Lord.

Ezekiel and John are united not only by their circumstances—called to prophesy while in exile—which is a shared distinction that sets them apart from all other biblical prophets,<sup>11</sup> but also by the manner and content of their visions. Ezekiel and John are both commanded by the Lord at the beginning of their visions to communicate what they have seen and heard.<sup>12</sup> Ezekiel is to speak the Word of the Lord to the hard-hearted people of

---

<sup>10</sup> Scripture quotations are from NASB unless otherwise noted. I use my own translation only when it is significantly different from the NASB.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel is, of course, an exilic prophet but is not called to prophesy to the people. In fact, after witnessing one vision, he states that he kept the matter to himself (Dan 7:28). After a subsequent vision, he is baffled but returns back to work (Dan 8:27). And, at the end of the last vision, he records being told to “conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time” (Dan 12:4). Not once is Daniel told to relay the Word of God to the people in exile. Therefore, John and Ezekiel are unique in their prophetic call.

<sup>12</sup> Ezekiel in Ezek 2:7; 3:4; 3:10. John in Rev 1:11, 19. John is also commanded to write at the beginning of each of the seven letters as well as in Rev 14:13, 19:9, and 21:5. John is also ordered “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.” (Rev 22:10). The only thing that John is commanded not to write down is what the seven peals of thunder have spoken (Rev 10:4).

God; as the Lord instructs him, “And I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children; and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’ As for them, whether they listen or not – for they are a rebellious house – they will know that a prophet has been among them” (Ezek 2:4–5). In fact, after he is ordered to consume a scroll from the Lord (Ezek 3:1), which he obeys, the only words that he can physically speak are the ones given to him from the Lord until the city of Jerusalem is destroyed (Ezek 3:27). John records the Word of the Lord and writes to seven churches in Asia Minor. Both prophets, though their prophecies begin in their exile, end with the Lord coming down to a holy city, a New Jerusalem (though Ezekiel doesn’t go so far as to call it such), to dwell among his people forever. The overlap demonstrates a similar theology and trajectory for both prophets. It is what takes place within their individual prophetic narratives that further unites them. These similarities will be examined below.

Though this is not specific to Ezekiel and John, they share the commonality that the Spirit of God is instrumental in both Ezekiel and John receiving their visions.<sup>13</sup>

Ezekiel, ten different times, begins his vision with phrases such as: “Then the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet” (2:2; cf. 3:24) or “Then the Spirit lifted me up” (3:12,

---

<sup>13</sup> This comes as no surprise as Peter tells us, “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” (2 Pet 1:20–21). Overall, Ezekiel mentions the Spirit of God twelve times: 2:2; 3:12,14,24; 8:3; 11:1,24; 36:27; 37:1,14; 39:29; 43:5. John mentions the Spirit of God eighteen times: Rev 1:4,10; 2:7,11,17,29; 3:1,6,13,22; 4:2,5; 5:6; 14:13; 17:3; 19:10; 21:10; 22:17.

Both Ezekiel and John also demonstrate a similar role that the Holy Spirit fulfills. Ezekiel states, “‘As He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard Him speaking to me’” (2:2). It appears that Ezekiel is attributing his ability to hear the Lord speaking to him because of the Spirit entering him. Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 69 makes the same conclusion: “The entry of the Spirit not only raises him to his feet but enables him to hear God’s speech.” In Revelation, the Spirit is the one responsible for communicating the vision to John as the vision begins with John being “in the Spirit” (Rev 1:10). The Spirit is also mentioned at the end of each of John’s letters to the seven churches with the phrase, which Jesus instructs John to use: “He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says” (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22.) Both of these examples, like the one given above in regards to the Spirit of God in Ezekiel, demonstrate one central characteristic of the Spirit of God: he communicates the will of God.

14; 8:3; 11:1; 43:5)<sup>14</sup> or “Then the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me” (11:5). John begins Revelation by simply stating that he was “in the Spirit on the Lord’s day” (1:10; cf. 4:2). But John also records that an angel “carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness” (Rev 17:3). The overlap between the two, in terms of God-given visions, is most pronounced when looking at Ezek 40:2 and Rev 21:10. Ezekiel describes, “In the visions of God he brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, and on it to the south there was a structure like a city” (40:2). And John, making a *clear allusion* to Ezekiel, documents, “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God” (Rev 21:10). Both visions entail the Lord taking the prophet away to a high mountain and showing him a holy city. These verses will be evaluated later but the common circumstances surrounding their call, the Spirit-led revelation given, the identical language used, the similar concluding visions, as well as the images and central themes, especially the kingship of God, which will be discussed later, demonstrate that the overlap between the prophets is substantial.

The theology of Ezekiel and the theology of John’s Revelation are parallel as well. In line with prophetic tradition, both speak of Messianic hope, with Ezekiel referencing the promised Davidic Shepherd and John proclaiming that the Davidic Shepherd and Messiah are both located in Jesus. Both see the Lord as the righteous Judge, with Ezekiel prophesying against the enemies of God (or the enemies of God’s people) like Ammon, Moab, Edom, Tyre, and Egypt (cf. Ezek 25–30), while John prophesies against those kings of the earth who faithfully served the whore of Babylon

---

<sup>14</sup> Ezek 11:24 records, “And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God to the exiles in Chaldea.” 37:1 records, “The hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord.”



(cf. Rev 17–18). The Lord, after giving ample time to these nations to repent, judges and destroys the enemies mentioned in each prophet. Judgment is a common theme of most biblical prophets, but where Ezekiel and John overlap is in the pattern of judgment followed by a lament; this occurs multiple times in Ezekiel<sup>15</sup> and is found in Revelation as well in regards to Babylon (18:9–20). Also unique to Ezekiel and John is that each witnesses and ends his visions with the tabernacling of the Divine Presence among his people.<sup>16</sup> Both portray the heart of the Lord as relational and conclude pointing to this eschatological hope.

In regards to their prophetic self-identity, the most significant overlap between John and Ezekiel is the vision they share of a scroll and the Lord's command to each. Ezekiel is told,

“Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.” Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it. When he spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe. Then he said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” So I opened my mouth, and he fed me this scroll. he said to me, “Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you.” Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth”<sup>17</sup>

John, in a *clear allusion* to Ezekiel, witnesses a similar circumstance in which the Lord instructs him to take a book from the hand of an angel and, “‘eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.’ I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter” (Rev 10:8–10). Finding allusions to Ezekiel in John's

---

<sup>15</sup> Ezekiel contains a lament over Tyre (26:17–18; 27:1–36); over the king of Tyre (28:11–19); and over Pharaoh and Egypt (32:1–16).

<sup>16</sup> See Ezek 48:35 and Rev 21–22. Zech 14, especially v.9, implies this but does not make it explicit; the same can be said of Isa 66:18.

<sup>17</sup> Ezek 2:8–3:3.

Apocalypse is commonplace,<sup>18</sup> but this particular allusion points not only to a textual echo, but to a commonality between the prophetic figures themselves. John is standing in the prophetic line of Ezekiel and the Lord is revealing to him a similar vision to that which he revealed to Ezekiel. The similarity is so striking and the circumstances are so similar that it leads Moyise to conclude that John *is* Ezekiel at this point: “The most obvious explanation is that John has taken on the ‘persona’ of Ezekiel. Through meditation and study (of which there are ample precedents), John has absorbed something of the character and mind of the prophet. This is why he can make so many allusions to the book without ever actually quoting it.”<sup>19</sup> This study will not argue that John exclusively ‘becomes’ Ezekiel<sup>20</sup> but that John utilizes Ezekiel’s Davidic Shepherd and view of the kingship of God to further promote his own portrayal of the Divine King. The consistent allusions and even the structure of the book<sup>21</sup> bear witness to the influence of Ezekiel on John as he is recording his vision. John often extends or applies Ezekiel’s meaning to his current context in a way that brings further clarity to what Ezekiel saw; this freedom in John’s interpretation and application of Ezekiel is due to the progressive revelation that the Lord is giving to John. It is not that John is simply concocting his own Apocalypse based on having internalized the Book of Ezekiel, but that John describes the visions given to him in the “Revelation of Jesus Christ” by drawing on the rich prophetic

---

<sup>18</sup> Kowalski, “Transformation of Ezekiel in John’s Revelation,” 302–307 documents 122 allusions that John makes to Ezekiel. She defines an allusion as having an “agreement of at least two relevant words.”

<sup>19</sup> Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament*, 78. Moyise also alludes on p.80 to merkabah mysticism to say that John has taken on the persona of Ezekiel, an interpretation with which I disagree.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Moyise, *Old Testament*, 80, in which Moyise himself points out the weakness and danger in referring to John as Ezekiel since John also pulls from Daniel, Zechariah, Isaiah, and other OT prophets but that does not mean that he has taken on their personas as well.

<sup>21</sup> The structural influence of Ezekiel on Revelation has been observed by: Kowalski, “Transformation of Ezekiel in John’s Revelation,” 295; Moyise, *The Old Testament*, 67–68; Mathews, *A New Heaven*, 234; Goulder dedicates an article to it but his conclusions are generally seen as not feasible (M.D. Goulder, “The Apocalypse as an Annual Cycle of Prophecies,” *NTS* 27 [1981]: 342–67).

tradition which he has absorbed and of which he stands as the culmination.<sup>22</sup> It is with this rich connection to Ezekiel that John develops the kingship of God imagery. John sees the Lord on his throne and has internalized the Book of Ezekiel. Therefore, he pulls from the imagery of Ezekiel, like an artist from his palate, to use the Ezekielian hues within his painting of the glorious image of the Divine King enthroned before him. In doing so, John gives the prophecy of Ezekiel new significance and enriches his own portrayal of the kingship of God.

### 1.5 – Summary and Thesis

In this chapter, I have reviewed the major questions that come up in the study of the OT in the NT and, specifically, in the study of John's use of the OT, especially Ezekiel, in Revelation. I have established that John intentionally alludes to OT passages, interpreting them in light of the resurrected Messiah, Jesus Christ, and, in doing so, adds new significance or application to their original meaning. Ezekiel 40–48 is an eschatological vision that is parallel to John's vision in Rev 21–22. I have explained my choice of the term "Divine Presence" and how I have defined it for the purposes of this study. I have also committed to follow Beale's terminology when it comes to allusions, with the options being a *clear allusion*, a *probable allusion*, or a *possible allusion*. I have shown that John connects himself closely to Ezekiel and that their common circumstances may have encouraged this connection. His numerous allusions to Ezekiel and, at times, paralleling of Ezekiel's structure demonstrate the impact that Ezekiel has

---

<sup>22</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 144, whom I paraphrase above, states, "[Revelation] is a work of Christian prophecy which understands itself to be the culmination of the whole biblical prophetic tradition. Its continuity with Old Testament prophecy is deliberate and impressively comprehensive."

had on John. I now turn to what this study will entail, as has been laid out in the abstract above.

My thesis is that John intentionally uses Ezekiel to demonstrate that Ezekiel's Davidic Shepherd is the Divine King in the New Jerusalem. John frequently alludes to Ezekiel in his portrayal of the Divine Presence, of the kingship of God, and of the New Jerusalem. John depicts Jesus to be the Davidic Shepherd as well as the Divine Presence. He then alludes to Ezekiel's description of the Divine Presence and uses this description to describe Jesus. A permeating theme of Ezekiel is the kingship of God. It is no surprise, given John's proclivity for alluding to Ezekiel, that this also is a central theme of Revelation, which is evident by the dominant symbol of the throne of God. John also heavily relies on Ezekiel in his description of the New Jerusalem. The significant influence of Ezekiel on the Apocalypse is demonstrated through John's consistent allusions to the book and in the fact that John goes so far as to parallel Ezekiel's structure at one point. With each allusion to Ezekiel's portrayal of Divine kingship, John furthers his presentation of the Davidic Shepherd, Jesus, as the Divine King. John's allusions to verses in Ezekiel add new significance to the original meaning that Ezekiel gave them, especially since Ezekiel is unlikely to have viewed the Davidic Shepherd as Divine, and enhance John's portrayal of the Divine King. It is a portrayal that, with John's final vision, comes in glorious consummation as the fully inaugurated Kingdom of God descends in the everlasting holy city, the New Jerusalem, with the Davidic Shepherd, the Divine King, dwelling among his people and seated on his throne in the middle of the city to reign forevermore.

## CHAPTER TWO: JESUS AS THE DAVIDIC SHEPHERD AND THE DIVINE PRESENCE

In order to see the Davidic Shepherd as the Divine King in the New Jerusalem, we must first answer the following questions: Where does the image of the Davidic Shepherd originate? What is Ezekiel's portrayal of him? Who does John declare him to be? How does he relate to the Divine Presence? And what new significance and implications are found in John's declaration?

### **2.1 – Jesus as the Messiah and the Davidic Shepherd**

#### 2.1.1 – Setting the Framework

John makes frequent use of Ezekiel throughout Revelation. He alludes to the Davidic shepherd of Ezek 34 on multiple occasions; these allusions fit the classification of *clear allusions*. Another allusion, which would be classified a *possible allusion*, may be found in John referencing the Davidic king of Ezek 37. Each of these allusions that John makes to the Davidic Shepherd in Ezekiel contributes to furthering John's portrayal of the Divine Presence as King in the New Jerusalem.

#### 2.1.2 – OT Background: The Davidic Shepherd and King

Ezekiel's portrayal of the Davidic Shepherd, who is the same person as the Davidic King—"shepherd" is a metaphor for king, which I will establish below—is influenced by at least a couple of Scriptures. The first Scripture that Ezekiel alludes to concerning the Davidic king is Gen 49:10, which is spoken by Israel on his deathbed. Israel blesses Judah, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from

between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples” (Gen 49:10). Ezekiel makes a *probable allusion* to this in Ezek 21:27, which shows his awareness of the text. Ezekiel states, “A ruin, a ruin, a ruin, I shall make it. This also will be no more, until He comes whose right it is; and I shall give it to Him” (Ezek 21:27).<sup>23</sup> The last half of this verse is an allusion to the second half of Gen 49:10.<sup>24</sup> Genesis 49:10 is a text that promises that a ruler from the line of Judah will reign until a promised future king comes. While it is debatable whether Ezekiel saw this as a “messianic prophecy,”<sup>25</sup> he certainly viewed this text as one that contributed to the promise of a Davidic Shepherd as David was of the line of Judah. The other major influence on Ezekiel’s portrayal of the Davidic Shepherd is the primary text through which the promise of a future Davidic King comes: 2 Sam 7. In it, God declares the promise of a king who will reign forever to David, in what is referred to as the Davidic Covenant: “When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever... And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever” (2 Sam 7:12–13, 16). According to this promise of God, there will come a king in the line of David who will reign forever; reigning forever obviously places this king outside the context of an average human being.

---

<sup>23</sup> I will analyze this text later. In its context, Ezekiel does not employ it in promise but in judgment on disobedient Judah. Nevertheless, it shows Ezekiel’s familiarity with the promise concerning the Davidic King.

<sup>24</sup> Supported by Moran (W. Moran, “Gen 49:10 and its use in Ezek 21:32,” *Bib* 39 [1958] 405–25); Block (Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 692–93), and Allen (Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48*, 28).

<sup>25</sup> Ezekiel does not use the word Messiah, and whether or not Ezekiel had a concept of a “Messiah” is unknowable. Even if he did, he would likely not have considered it in the same light as those who come after Jesus, as evidenced by John.

The other two texts that will be evaluated may or may not have influenced Ezekiel's view, as they were certainly around at his time and concern the Davidic King, but are used by John in combination with Ezekiel to form mixed allusions. These texts are found in two psalms. The first is Ps 2, which is a royal psalm with messianic overtones for John. The Lord declares, "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain. I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware'" (Ps 2:6–9). This psalm portrays a king, one whom John at least saw as the Davidic King, as the Son of God and as the Lord's King, reigning with complete dominion and authority. The other psalm to be examined is one that recapitulates the promises made to David in 2 Sam 7. Psalm 89 states, "I have found David My servant; with My holy oil I have anointed him, with whom My hand will be established...I also shall make him My first-born, The highest of the kings of the earth...And his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established forever like the moon, And the witness in the sky is faithful" (Ps 89:20–21, 23, 27–8, 35–37). The Davidic Servant will be anointed with the holy oil of the Lord. It should be mentioned that the word for "anointed" is the verb "מָשַׁח", the noun form of which is where the word "Messiah" comes from. This Davidic Servant, whom John refers to as the Messiah, will be the firstborn of the Lord and the "highest of the kings of the earth." John will utilize both of these texts in combination with Ezekiel.

### 2.1.3 – The Davidic Shepherd in Ezekiel

The promise of a Davidic Shepherd given to Ezekiel, to which John alludes three times in Revelation,<sup>26</sup> is: “Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken” (Ezek 34:23–24). The Davidic Shepherd will rule and properly provide for the people of the Lord,<sup>27</sup> doing so under the authority of the Lord. Because John often combines texts in his descriptions of his vision, direct allusions can at times be difficult to discern. He combines two of his allusions to this text with an allusion to Ps 2. Nevertheless, an allusion is being made to Ezekiel, as will be examined below. I will first discuss the contextual meaning of the text in Ezekiel before examining the significance that John adds to it in Revelation.

The Lord declares many promises about the Davidic Shepherd<sup>28</sup> to Ezekiel.<sup>29</sup> The major sections concerning the Davidic Shepherd are found in chapters 34 and 37.<sup>30</sup> It is

---

<sup>26</sup> Rev 2:27; 7:17; and 19:15.

<sup>27</sup> The emphasis on feeding and providing for the people is made because in the previous section (Ezek 34:1–10) the Lord laments the poor shepherds (kings) whom Israel and Judah have had and wants to install one who will be fully committed to doing the Lord’s will and behaving in the way that the Lord demands.

<sup>28</sup> The Davidic Shepherd may not have been seen as the Messiah by Ezekiel (the concept of Messiah is not made obvious in Ezekiel) but Block demonstrates its interpretation as Messianic by Ezekiel’s interpreters. Daniel I. Block, “Bringing Back David: Ezekiel’s Messianic Hope,” in *The Lord’s Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts* (eds. Philip E. Satterthwaite, Richard S. Hess, Gordon J. Wenham; Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1996), 168 states, “The messianic interpretation of specific texts like Ezekiel 34:23–24 is implicit in LXX and Peshitta, and overt in the Vulgate and the Rabbinic *Genesis Rabbah* 97.”

<sup>29</sup> The first promise of a future Davidic King is found in Ezek 17 when, after the Lord, through a parable, brings judgment upon Zedekiah, the Lord promises to take a “sprig” from a cedar tree and plant it. It will grow into a tree under which every bird of every wing (“כָּל־צֶמֶךְ וְכָל־עוֹף”) will nest (17:23). This sprig is reminiscent of Isaiah’s shoot or Zechariah’s branch. The tree, which becomes a “לְאֹרֶז אֲדִיר” (“majestic cedar”) planted on the high mountain of Israel, is representative of the Kingdom of God (as other kingdoms are represented by majestic trees such as Assyria in Ezek 31 (Ezekiel compares Assyria to a cedar of Lebanon in 31:3) and Babylon in Dan 4). The text does not mention David but speaks of a king who will reign over a kingdom that the Lord will establish. The connection, even in keeping it to Ezekiel and outside the context of messianic prophecy, can easily be seen between it and the Davidic King of Ezekiel 37. Credit belongs to Block for pointing this text out. Block notes, “Ezekiel’s botanical imagery in verses 22–24 is



within these chapters that the Lord discusses his plans for his exiled people. The Lord promises to deliver his people (“his flock”) from the terrible shepherds (i.e. rulers) who have previously led them (Ezek 34:10). The Lord then promises that he himself will care for his sheep as their shepherd (Ezek 34:11–16). It is within this section that the Lord also promises to judge the flock. After this judgment comes the promise of the Davidic shepherd: “Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken.” (Ezek 34:23–24). This shepherd language connects well to the promise of a future Davidic servant as David himself was told by the Lord that he “would shepherd My people Israel” (2 Sam 5:2). The Greek word for the verb shepherd, ποιμαίνω, can mean “to shepherd or to rule.”<sup>31</sup> The ruling aspect of shepherding is metaphorical. Rulers in the ancient Near East were sometimes referred to as shepherds of their people, including Hammurabi<sup>32</sup> and Nebuchadnezzar II.<sup>33</sup> Judah and the Israelites who remain, wherever they are scattered, are in desperate need of a proper shepherd. The kings of the Northern Kingdom were entirely faithless, and of the forty-two kings of the Southern Kingdom only a handful proved to be faithful to the Lord. The people of God have been under poor leadership for more than three centuries. And now they are in exile in Babylon due to their sins as well

---

reminiscent of the language of other prophets, who had spoken of the messianic scion who would revive the Davidic line as a הַצֵּר, “shoot,” and a נֶצֶר, “branch” (Isa 11:1) or as a צֶמַח, “sprout” (Jer 23:5).”

<sup>30</sup> Block, “Bringing Back David,” 169 comments that “unequivocal references to the Messiah occur in only two contexts, 34:22–23 and 37:22–25.”

<sup>31</sup> BDAG, s.v. ποιμαίνω.

<sup>32</sup> Hammurabi refers to himself in the Code of Hammurabi as a “salvation-bearing shepherd.” “The Code of Hammurabi,” translated by L.W. King (1915). Accessed from <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/ham/ham08.htm>.

<sup>33</sup> “Nebuchadnezzar II’s Restoration of E-Urimin-Ankia, The Ziggurat of Borsippa,” translated by Paul-Alain Beaulieu (*COS* 2.122B:309). Quoted by Danny Mathews, *Royal Motifs in the Pentateuchal Portrayal of Moses*, LHBOTS 571 (New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2012), 54. In additional references to Nebuchadnezzar II in this paper, I will refer to him just as “Nebuchadnezzar.” This seems easiest, as Nebuchadnezzar I predated Nebuchadnezzar II by 500 years and is not mentioned in the Bible at all.

as the sins of their kings. They are not given a timetable for his coming but just a promise that the Lord's servant David will come and be prince among them. This prince will be their only shepherd ("רֹעֶה אֶחָד"). The uniqueness of his position is further emphasized in Ezek 37 where "אֶחָד" ("one") is mentioned eleven times.<sup>34</sup> It is this prince who will "be king over them....and My servant David shall be their prince forever" (Ezek 37:24–25).<sup>35</sup> The Davidic Servant will be the sole shepherd over the people of God, a people who in Ezekiel's day were in the midst of a seventy-year exile due to following their godless shepherds who violated the Mosaic Covenant and, therefore, brought on the curse of subjugation.<sup>36</sup> Yet there is this promise of hope that David will one day reign over them and that his reign will last forever. Notice that the Davidic Servant is referred to as both "מֶלֶךְ" ("king") and "נָשִׂיךְ" ("prince"); this is to stress the fact that the servant will reign as king over his people but do so under the authority and will of God, hence the secondary description of "prince." It is with this understanding that I will evaluate John's allusions in Revelation. However, before examining how John continues in the vein of Ezekiel, I will briefly look at Jesus, whom John refers to as the fulfillment of the promise of a Davidic Shepherd and as the Messiah, and his self-attestation that he is both the Messiah and Davidic Shepherd.

#### 2.1.4 – Jesus' Attestation that He is the Messiah, the Davidic Shepherd

John's primary source for his view of Jesus as the Messiah is Jesus' own witness. Jesus declares himself to be the Messiah, or "Anointed One," and the Davidic Shepherd in multiple ways throughout the Gospels. This study will not be exhaustive but thorough

---

<sup>34</sup> Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 297n139.

<sup>35</sup> Ezekiel's use of "prince" and "king" will be discussed further in chapter four.

<sup>36</sup> See Deut 28:36, 49–50.

enough to show that Jesus recognized himself as both the Davidic Shepherd and the Messiah, demonstrating that the two are one. He proclaimed it in both direct and indirect ways, drew on OT Messianic prophecy, and made certain that his disciples knew him as the Messiah.

In John 4, Jesus chooses to reveal himself as Messiah to a Samaritan woman who is living in sin. The woman tells Jesus, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when that One comes, he will declare all things to us” (John 4:25). She is expecting the Messiah to come. Her eager expectation is met with Jesus’ reply, “I who speak to you am he” (John 4:26). It is the most direct declaration that Jesus makes that he is the Messiah.<sup>37</sup>

Jesus also draws on shepherd imagery when declaring himself to be the Messiah. Matthew and Mark both record Jesus taking pity on the crowds because they were “like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:36; Mark 6:34), a statement likely echoing back to the statement that the Lord makes about the leaders of Israel in Ezek 34:1-10. Jesus calls himself the “Good Shepherd” and declares that he will lay down his life for his sheep (John 10:14–15); this is a *clear allusion* to the Davidic Shepherd in Ezek 34. He also makes a clear allusion to Ezek 37:24<sup>38</sup> when He states that He will be the one shepherd over one flock (John 10:16).<sup>39</sup> The idea of the Davidic Shepherd being the Messiah must exist by this time because the Jews, shortly after Jesus makes this declaration, ask him

---

<sup>37</sup> Jesus most likely keeps his identity hidden or a secret in Jewish areas due to the fact that each time he reveals himself, the people try to kill him. See Matt 26:4; Mark 12:12; 14:1; Luke 4:29; 20:20; John 5:18; 7:1, 19, 25, 30, 32, 44; 8:37, 40, 59; 10:31, 39; 11:53, 57.

<sup>38</sup> “And My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances, and keep My statutes, and observe them” (Eze 37:24).

<sup>39</sup> Though Jesus adds new significance to this text as He is discussing the unification of Jew and Gentile under His rule whereas Ezekiel is speaking in regards to the unification of the divided kingdom (Israel and Judah). Andreas Köstenberger, “John,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, (eds. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson: Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 463 concurs, “Jesus’ statement “there will be one flock, one shepherd” represents an allusion to Ezek. 34:23; 37:24.”

whether or not he is the Messiah. They demand, “How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly” (John 10:24). Clearly the Jews listening to Jesus speak about the Davidic Shepherd inferred Jesus to be speaking about the Messiah; that is to say, they saw the Davidic Shepherd as equivalent to the Messiah. Jesus responds indirectly but in the affirmative, “I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep” (John 10:25). He does not tell them directly that he is the Messiah but his answer implies that he is. After answering, he returns to the shepherd imagery, suggesting that they don’t understand who he is because they are not his sheep (John 10:26-29).<sup>40</sup>

This brief survey concludes with looking at how Jesus presented himself to his disciples. He affirms his identity as the Messiah in a direct manner when he asks them, “Who do you (plural) say that I am?” (Matt 16:15) Simon Peter responds, “σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος.” (“You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God”).<sup>41</sup> Jesus responds by blessing Peter because only God the Father could reveal this to him (Matt 16:17). Jesus then reveals to his disciples that he will suffer, die, and rise again. He wants to make sure that they know all that is going to happen to him due to the fact that he is the Messiah.

Jesus performs miracles, speaks in parables, points to himself as the fulfilment of prophecy, prophesies about himself, and reveals himself in direct and indirect speech, all

---

<sup>40</sup> This incident is made even more significant if one sees the author of the Gospel of John as the same John who authored Revelation, as I do. John has written a firsthand account of Jesus declaring himself to be the Messiah, a declaration based on his drawing on the Davidic Shepherd imagery, which John himself witnessed. Even if one doesn’t see the John of Revelation as the same John who wrote the Fourth Gospel, this incident is still telling. For a succinct argument for Johannine authorship of Revelation, see Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 2–6.

<sup>41</sup> Matt 16:16 (my translation).

of which point to the fact that he is the Messiah. The author of Revelation understood this clearly as well.

#### 2.1.5 – John’s Declaration of Jesus as Messiah through Allusions to Ezekiel

That John sees Jesus as the Messiah is evident in the title of the book, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ (i.e. the Messiah).” Therefore, this section will only be concerned with how John uses Ezekiel to demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic Shepherd and Messianic prophecies.

John draws from Ezek 34:23 in multiple places and, in so doing, demonstrates Jesus to be the fulfillment of this prophecy. Ezekiel states, “καὶ ἀναστήσω ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ποιμένα ἓνα καὶ ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς τὸν δοῦλόν μου Δαυὶδ καὶ ἔσται αὐτῶν ποιμήν.” (“And I will cause to rise over them one shepherd, and My servant David will shepherd them and he will be their shepherd.” Ezek 34:23).<sup>42</sup> The first text about the Messiah in which John alludes to Ezekiel is Rev 2:27: “καὶ ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ ὡς τὰ σκεύη τὰ κεραμικὰ συντρίβεται, ὡς κἀγὼ εἴληφα παρὰ τοῦ πατρός μου.” (“And he will shepherd them with an iron scepter, as vessels of clay are broken into pieces, as also I have received authority<sup>43</sup> from my Father.”)<sup>44</sup> John makes a clear allusion, one so close that it could almost be called a quotation, to Ps 2:9 (“ποιμανεῖς αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ ὡς σκεῦος κεραμέως συντρίψεις αὐτούς”). John combines it with parts of Ezek 34:23. ποιμαίνω (“to shepherd, to rule”) is used in all three verses, which shows the connection

---

<sup>42</sup> The LXX is used here for the sake of comparing Greek to Greek. The Hebrew is nearly identical.

<sup>43</sup> ἐξουσία, located in the previous verse (2:26), is the referent of which Jesus is speaking of giving as he has been given. NASB, ESV, and NIV all translate similarly.

<sup>44</sup> Rev 2:27 (Rev 2:27–28a in the NA 27). My translation.

of shepherding,<sup>45</sup> a metaphor for ruling as discussed above. What demonstrates that this is a mixed allusion to Ps 2 and Ezek 34 is John's adding, "as also I have received authority." It is parallel to the Lord declaring through Ezekiel, "And I will cause to rise over them one shepherd."<sup>46</sup> The authority for the Davidic Shepherd comes from God. Jesus the Messiah is declaring through John that as God the Father has given him authority, he will grant authority to those who prove themselves faithful.

John makes an allusion to Ezek 34:23 in Rev 19:15 in a similar way to his allusion in 2:27; he states, "And from his mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it he may smite the nations; and he will rule ("ποιμανεῖ") them with a rod of iron; and he treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty" (Rev 19:15). John's use of ποιμαίνω connects us to the Davidic shepherd displayed in Ezek 34 as well as Ps 2.<sup>47</sup> John also points out that Jesus is enacting this judgment with "the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty." It serves as another example of Jesus acting on the authority that God the Father has given him. Jesus is shepherding over humanity and judging them, but the authority to enact the punishment for the justified wrath that he determines comes from God. To harken back to Ezek 34, God has caused Jesus to arise for this purpose. The combination of the shepherding and God-granted authority shows John's connection with Ezekiel.

John's allusion to Ezek 34:23 in Rev 7:17 is seen as such for the same reasons argued above. John writes, "for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every

---

<sup>45</sup> John is likely implementing the rule of *gezerah shawah* here: as the significant word ποιμαίνω is found in both Psalm 2:9 and Ezekiel 34:23, so he brings forth the meaning from both into his own combined form in Revelation 2:27. See Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 20.

<sup>46</sup> Therefore, it should be labeled a *probable allusion*.

<sup>47</sup> John is likely implementing the rule of *gezerah shawah* here as well.

tear from their eyes” (Rev 7:17). The shepherd imagery is prevalent, again, as is the idea of the Messiah (called “the Lamb” in this verse) working under the authority of God.

The image of the Messiah as Davidic Shepherd dominates Ezek 34. John draws on it to show Jesus as the fulfilment of this prophecy. Jesus rules under the authority of God the Father and cares for his people like a shepherd cares for his flock. He also rules over his people as a shepherd-king who guides his people in the way that they should go.

A less defensible argument, but still worth considering, is John’s echo of a messianic prophecy in Rev 1:5. As he does in Rev 2:27, John sometimes combines OT prophecy to show Jesus as the fulfilment of each. In his prologue, John states, “and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5). John clearly alludes to Ps 89 in this verse<sup>48</sup> to make a statement on who Jesus the Messiah is. However, he makes a slight change in the third appellation. Instead of directly quoting the psalm and saying “the highest (“ὕψιστος”) of the kings of the earth,” John calls Jesus the “ruler (“ἄρχων”) of the kings of the earth.” It is a stretch but Ezekiel, in the LXX, uses ἄρχων frequently to describe the reign of the Davidic Servant. Ezekiel describes David as: “being prince (“ἄρχων”) among them” (Ezek 34:23); “One king (“ἄρχων”) shall be king over them all” (Ezek 37:22); “My servant David shall be king (“ἄρχων”) over them” (Ezek 37:24); and “David my Servant will be their prince (“ἄρχων”) forever” (Ezek 37:25). The prominence of ἄρχων in these Messianic sections could be why John chose to use the word in his description of Jesus the Messiah.<sup>49</sup> If so, it would be another way that John uses Ezekiel to build a fuller

<sup>48</sup> David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, WBC 52 (Dallas: Word Book, 1997), 37 makes this connection.

<sup>49</sup> If so, John could be implementing the fourth of the *middoth* of Hillel (at least attributed to Hillel), which is the principle of *binyan ’ab mishene kethubim*. In utilizing this principle, one takes from two texts to make an assertion; this assertion can set the framework for other texts. It would mean that John is taking

picture of Jesus as the Messiah, the Davidic King. Unfortunately, the common usage of ἄρχων in the rest of the OT keeps this argument merely an observation of a possible echo.

## 2.2 – Jesus as the Divine Presence<sup>50</sup>

Having demonstrated John's locating Jesus as the Davidic Shepherd and Messiah, we now turn to looking at Jesus as the Divine Presence. One implication of which will be that the Davidic Shepherd is actually Divine.

### 2.2.1 – Overlapping Roles in Ezekiel

Though Ezekiel never equates the Davidic Shepherd with the Lord at any point, an overlap in their role is suggested. My argument remains that Jesus' attestation to his own divinity is the primary influence on John's view in Revelation; this section is just to demonstrate that even if Ezekiel did not make the connection himself, it is plausible to look back and see a tie. Thus, John does not contradict Ezekiel when alluding to the Davidic Shepherd and also proclaiming that Davidic Shepherd to be Divine. Having been provided further Divine revelation, he is, instead, completing the portrait of which Ezekiel saw only the framework.

The Lord declares, "'As I live," declares the Lord God, "surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you" (Ezek 20:33). In this verse the Lord promises that he will one day reign over Israel. Later in the book, he makes a similar statement using shepherd imagery:

---

the word ἄρχων, which alludes to the Davidic King in Ezekiel, and combining it with the verses that he has already combined from Psalm 89: 27, 37. It should be noted that, even if Ezekiel 34 is determined to not be in play here, the rule of *binyan 'ab mishene kethubim* likely is as John has pulled three assertions from two different verses to form a series of appellations that speak to who Jesus is. See Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 20.

<sup>50</sup> Jesus is the Divine Presence as the Divine Presence is fully present in Jesus but it must be noted here that the Divine Presence is not only fully present in Jesus but in God the Father and God the Spirit as well.



For thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down in good grazing ground, and they will feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord God.<sup>51</sup>

The Lord declares himself to be the one who will nurture and care for his people. He assumes the role of shepherd here, a role that sounds very similar to what his expectations are for the Davidic Shepherd to perform, "'Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd'" (Ezek 34:23). The role is identical, as both are described as shepherds who perform the usual functions of a shepherd, and may suggest an overlap between the two. The connection is furthered when one sees that the Lord says, "אֶמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיכֶם" ("I shall be king over you") and also declares that "וְעֶבְדִּי דָוִד מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיכֶם" ("My servant David will be king over them") (Ezek 37:24). Both the Lord and David are depicted as reigning over Israel. It is the similarity in their role that allows for a further connection to be made. This, of course, is a connection that Ezekiel never makes as Ezekiel is likely to have interpreted the Davidic Shepherd reigning as the Lord's vice-regent. But John, in light of the resurrected Jesus, has been given a new perspective, which Ezekiel and most of John's contemporaries never had on the Messiah.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, when John approaches Ezekiel, he

---

<sup>51</sup> Ezek 34:11–15.

<sup>52</sup> N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 477 states, "the word 'Messiah', within Jesus' world, does not refer, in itself, to a divine or quasi-divine figure."

will not have to look far to see some overlap between the Davidic King,<sup>53</sup> the Messiah,<sup>54</sup> and the Lord,<sup>55</sup> which are all terms that John applies to Jesus. We now turn to Jesus' self-attestation, before looking at John's view, that he is Divine.

### 2.2.2 – Jesus attests to His Deity

I will briefly survey a few passages that demonstrate Jesus declaring himself to be Divine. In John 8, in the midst of a debate with the Pharisees, Jesus declares “εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμὶ. (“Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM.”)<sup>56</sup> Jesus is referring to the Name that the Lord told Moses, “ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν” (“I AM who I AM”) (Exod 3:14). Jesus is declaring himself to be God; this is further evidenced by the response of the Pharisees: “Therefore they picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple” (John 8:59). The Pharisees attempt to stone Jesus to death because he has committed blasphemy, in their minds, by setting himself equal with God.

In John 10, coming on the heels of Jesus' alluding to the Davidic Shepherd, a very similar scene takes place to that of John 8. Jesus declares, “‘I and the Father are one.’ The Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, ‘I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?’ The Jews answered him,

---

<sup>53</sup> John documents Jesus as the Davidic King a few times. Jesus refers to himself as having the “key of David” (Rev 3:8) and as “the root and the descendent of David” (Rev 22:18). He is also declared to be the “root of David” (Rev 5:5).

<sup>54</sup> John refers to Jesus as “Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ” (“Jesus the Messiah”) three times: Rev 1:1, 2, 5. He also refers to Jesus on four occasions simply as “Χριστός”: Rev 11:15; 12:10; 20:4,6.

<sup>55</sup> John calls Jesus “κύριος” (“Lord”) in Rev 11:8 and “κύριος κυρίων” (“Lord of lords”) in Rev 17:14.

<sup>56</sup> John 8:58. Even if the view of identical authorship of John and Rev is not held, the significance of the verse is found in Jesus claiming to be God. The Gospel of John records Jesus making multiple I am statements. None is as bold as the one discussed above but collectively they point to his divinity. They included Jesus saying I am: 1) the bread of life (John 6:35,48); the manna from Heaven (John 6:41,51); the light of the world (John 8:12); before Abraham was born (John 8:58); the door (John 10:7,9); the good shepherd (John 10:11,14); the resurrection and the life (John 11:25); the way the truth and the life (John 14:6); the true vine (John 15:1,5).

‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God’" (John 10:30–33). Jesus’ opponents understand very clearly who Jesus is claiming to be; he is telling them that he is God.

Jesus also declares himself to be Divine early in the Gospel of Mark. Four friends bring a paralytic friend to Jesus, digging through a roof and lowering him down. “And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, ‘My son, your sins are forgiven.’ But there were some of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ‘Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?’” (Mark 2:5–7). Jesus then demonstrates that he has the authority to forgive sins and he proceeds to heal the paralytic. Those in attendance marveled at what had happened. Jesus shows that he is indeed able to forgive sins by the miraculous healing that ensues (Mark 2:12b). The scribes were not wrong in their thinking that only God can forgive sins; they just didn’t realize that God Incarnate was speaking to them.

The last example that I will examine is the disciples’ opinion of Jesus, especially after the resurrection. Upon seeing Jesus, Matthew tells us that they, “προσελθοῦσαι ἐκράτησαν αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ.” (“they came up, grasped his feet and worshipped him”) (Matt 28:9). Jesus does not rebuke them or prevent them. It is not only after the resurrection that they do this. After Jesus comes out to the disciples in the boat by walking on the sea, and Peter briefly is enabled to do, Jesus joins them in the boat. Matthew records their response, “οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.” (“And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!") (Matt 14:33). Both of these texts contain the Greek verb

προσκυνέω, which means to worship. They worshipped Jesus and he did not stop them because he is God.

### 2.2.3 – Portrayal of Jesus as the Divine Presence in Revelation

Throughout Revelation, Jesus is seen as the Divine Presence. At times, Ezekiel's descriptions of God are used by John to describe Jesus. Jesus, through his claims, also demonstrates his divinity. I will survey both John's descriptions and Jesus' claims below.

In the first chapter of Revelation, John recounts, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet" (Rev 1:10). He then turns to see who is speaking to him. He sees:

one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across his breast with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white like white wool, like snow; and his eyes were like a flame of fire; and his feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. And in his right hand he held seven stars; and out of his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and his face was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as a dead man.<sup>57</sup>

John's vision of Jesus is very similar to Ezekiel's vision of God in Ezek 1. Ezekiel first describes the wings of the living creatures, "like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of the Almighty" (Ezek 1:24) The description is of the sound of the wings but the parallel descriptions are equivalent in Ezekiel's mind (i.e. the voice of the Almighty is like the sound of abundant waters). It's the same description that John records of the voice of Jesus. Ezekiel then sees God in his vision: "and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man. Then I noticed from the appearance of his loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw

---

<sup>57</sup> Rev 1:13b–17a.

something like fire; and there was a radiance around him” (Ezek 1:26b–27). Ezekiel and John both see one with the appearance of a man whose upward description is like fire and his legs and lower “something like fire” (Ezekiel’s description) or “burnished bronze” (John’s description). John is making us aware that Jesus is Divine by the description that he proffers and its overlap with Ezekiel’s vision of God. From this early God-like description, John builds the case for Jesus being the Divine Presence throughout Revelation.

Jesus, through John’s visions, makes many claims as to his Divine Presence. In the letter to the church at Ephesus, Jesus states, “To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God” (Rev 2:7b). Jesus is granting access into Eden; who can do that but God alone? In the letter to the church at Thyatira, Jesus tells John to write a description of Jesus as: “The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished bronze” (Rev 2:18). Not only does John allude to Ezekiel’s description of God, but Jesus himself does. He also calls himself the “Son of God.” Jesus then makes a claim to his omniscience in the same letter, “and all the churches will know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts” (Rev 2:23). Jesus is the one in charge of the book of life, which means eternal life with God for those whose names are in it (Rev 3:5). In the letter to the church at Laodicea, Jesus claims that he “overcame and sat down with My Father on his throne” (Rev 3:21). Jesus is reigning on the same throne as God the Father. By his claims, it is obvious that Jesus sees himself as the Divine Presence.

John’s descriptions also help to portray Jesus as the Divine Presence. John describes worship being attributed to Jesus in multiple passages. Jesus is worshiped along

with God the Father (Rev 5:11–14, 7:10–12, 11:15–18, 14:1–3). No one is worshipped in Heaven besides God because God himself has said that “I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another” (Isa 42:8). He has also stated, “I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God” (Exod 20:5, 34:14). Jesus is, therefore, being depicted as God.<sup>58</sup> Bauckham observes that Jesus and God share the same self-identification as the Alpha and Omega, first and last, beginning and the end within Revelation, which gives further evidence to the divinity of Jesus.<sup>59</sup> John also shows the combination of God Almighty and Jesus, who is referred to as the Lamb, as being the temple of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:22), the light for the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:23), and seated on the throne together (Rev 22:1, 3). Yet, in these descriptions of God and the Lamb, John “never makes them the subject of a plural verb or uses a plural pronoun to refer to them both.”<sup>60</sup> John’s descriptions and Jesus’ claims clearly show Jesus as the Divine Presence.

### 2.3 – Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that Jesus is the Davidic Shepherd and the Messiah. The Davidic Shepherd has his origins in the Davidic Covenant as well as the promise made to Judah but is substantially developed in Ezekiel. I have also observed that John portrays Jesus, through a mixture of OT allusions, which include allusions to Ezekiel, as the Davidic Shepherd granted the authority to rule by God. His kingship over his people is directed by the will of God. Jesus also alludes to Ezek 34 to declare himself the Davidic Shepherd and attests that he is the Messiah, which he proclaims indirectly to

---

<sup>58</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 63 concurs, “The importance of John’s extraordinarily high Christology for the message of Revelation is that it makes absolutely clear that what Christ does, God does. Since Christ shares the one eternal being of God, what Christ is said to do, in salvation and judgment, is no less truly and directly divine than what is said to be done by ‘the One who sits on the throne’.”

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 26. See Rev 1:8; 1:17; 21:6; 22:13.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 60–61.

the elite of his day as well as directly to his disciples and the downtrodden. In Revelation, John demonstrates that Jesus is both the Davidic Shepherd and the Messiah. The combining of these two figures is not out of the ordinary for John's day but where John takes the argument certainly would have been: John recognizes Jesus, the Davidic Shepherd and the Messiah, to be the Divine Presence.

In Revelation, John depicts Jesus as being worshipped, which is reserved solely for God, as well as sharing the same self-identification as God, the Alpha and Omega. I have shown that John's claim that Jesus is Divine does not originate with John but with Jesus himself, who claims to be equal with God on multiple occasions. I have also explored how John, alluding to Ezekiel, portrays Jesus in the same way that Ezekiel portrays God in his vision. Jesus is uniquely joined with the Father in John's portrayal of his divinity. They rule together from the throne and serve as the temple together. Jesus and God the Father are united even though they are also distinct.<sup>61</sup> Through his unity with and distinctness from God the Father, Jesus maintains his divinity.

Because the Davidic Shepherd finds his fulfillment in Jesus, who is the Divine Presence, the Davidic Shepherd, therefore, is Divine. We will now look at how the reign of the Divine Davidic Shepherd is depicted in Revelation by evaluating the portrayal of the Divine Presence as King.

---

<sup>61</sup> As a result of Jesus being demonstrated to be the Divine Presence, the description of the Divine Presence, going forward, will be evaluated as it pertains to God the Father, Jesus the Messiah, his Son, and the Spirit of God.

### CHAPTER THREE: THE DIVINE PRESENCE AS KING

As I have demonstrated that the Davidic Shepherd is located in Jesus and is, therefore, the Divine Presence, the next step is to look at: How do Ezekiel and John depict the Divine Presence? How does Ezekiel's portrayal influence John's portrayal? And what are the implications?

#### **3.1 – Setting the Framework for the Portrayal of the Divine Presence as King**

As I will demonstrate below, Ezekiel and John both depict the Divine Presence as King. The theme of God's kingship permeates the Book of Ezekiel.<sup>62</sup> Joyce states that the theme of God as king in Ezekiel "is a persistent if not pervasive one, and is often implicit even when not explicit."<sup>63</sup> Ezekiel has a significant, if not dominant, influence on John.<sup>64</sup> It is no surprise, then, that the book that has influenced John considerably should see its central theme carried over. Evidence that a central theme of the Book of Revelation is the kingship of God can be found in the frequent references of John to the throne of God.<sup>65</sup> John's central theme aligns with Ezekiel's, which may be one reason why John alludes so often to Ezekiel. He is bringing into clearer focus the portrait that Ezekiel paints of the Divine Presence as King and, ultimately, combining that image with Ezekiel's Davidic Shepherd. Before analyzing John's allusions to Ezekiel regarding the Divine Presence,

---

<sup>62</sup> William J. Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning* (Homebush West, Australia: Lancer, 1985), 57. in commenting on Ezekiel 40–48, states, "There is probably a confluence of traditions here, all of which underscore the emphasis placed upon divine kingship in these chapters."

<sup>63</sup> Paul Joyce, "King and Messiah in Ezekiel," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East, JSOTSup 270* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 332.

<sup>64</sup> Moyise and Kowalski concur. See Moyise, *Old Testament*, 74; Beate Kowalski, "Transformation of Ezekiel in John's Revelation," in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel*, eds. William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons, PTMS 127 (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 300. I would place Ezekiel's influence on John on par with Daniel, Isaiah, and Zechariah. The point isn't that he's more influential than these prophets but that his influence significantly contributes to John's portrayal of the Divine Presence as King.

<sup>65</sup> This will be further discussed below where we will see that John references the throne of God 47 times in 22 chapters.



however, it is important to first take a closer look at Ezekiel to see what influences shaped the development of his portrayal of the Divine Presence as King.

### **3.2 – OT Background for Ezekiel’s view of the Divine Presence as King**

There are likely a number of biblical influences that helped to shape Ezekiel’s view of God’s kingship but, for the sake of space and due to its significant influence, I will limit this survey to discussing the influence of Exodus on Ezekiel.

Ezekiel begins with a vision of the Divine Presence enthroned in Glory (Ezek 1:4–28). It is an image that sets the framework for the rest of Ezekiel’s visions. In this initial vision, two images, which Ezekiel describes, may be an allusion to the view of God that Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders describe as they partake of a covenant meal on Mt Sinai to ratify the freshly cut Mosaic Covenant (Exod 24:9–18). Ezekiel describes, “Now over the heads of the living beings there was something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, extended over their heads” (Ezek 1:22). Exodus records a similar expanse under the Lord: “and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself” (Exod 24:10). Both accounts describe an expanse or pavement that is clear “as crystal” or “as the sky itself,” with the Exodus account describing it to be made of sapphire where Ezekiel uses this description in regards to the throne of God (1:26).<sup>66</sup> Moving up from the expanse, Ezekiel describes the Lord, “Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins

---

<sup>66</sup> Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, ABC v.22 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 50 points out, “While MT evidently represents the throne itself to be of sapphire, G [Codex Alexandrinus] takes the sapphire to be a pavement on which the throne stood—a conception influenced, it seems, by Exod 24:10.” The interpretation of Codex Alexandrinus is made further understandable by the fact that the LXX has σάπφειρος (“sapphire”) listed in both Exodus 24:10 and Ezekiel 1:26. It is interesting to see that the connection between Ezekiel’s description of the throne and Exodus 24:10 is strong enough for one of the oldest biblical manuscripts to interpret one in light of the other; this gives further credence to an allusion being likely.

and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him” (Ezek 1:27). The Exodus account is similar: “And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountain top” (Exod 24:17). The glory of the Lord is represented by each as comparable to *עֵשׂ* (“fire”).<sup>67</sup> The glory of the Lord as fire is not unique but combined with the description of the expanse/pavement, this can at least be said to be a *probable allusion*. The implication of this allusion is that Ezekiel is echoing back to the exodus, which is the first display of God’s kingship over his people.

The exit out of Egypt starts with Moses being repeatedly commanded by God to say to Pharaoh, “Let *My* people go” (Exod 5:1, 7:16, 8:1, 8, 20, 21, 9:1, 13, 10:3, 4). Embedded within this phrase is the idea that the Israelites are not under Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, but under the sovereignty of the Lord; YHWH is their King. It is made more evident that a shift of kingship has taken place when the people celebrate the crossing of the Red Sea and the defeat of Pharaoh’s army, which is swallowed in the sea by the mighty hand of the Lord, with the “Song of Moses.” The people sing, “יְהוָהוּ יִמְלֶךְ לְעֹלָם” (Exod 15:18). It is the first Biblical use of the verb *יָמַלְךְ* with the Lord as the subject. Israel’s declaration of the reign of the Lord is a direct implication that he is their King. The relationship between the verb *יָמַלְךְ* and its cognate noun, *יָמֶלֶךְ*, (i.e. that he who is reigning is king) signals that the theme of the Lord

---

<sup>67</sup> These are not the only times that the Lord’s Presence has been associated with fire. Ezekiel is certainly in line with a biblical tradition by doing so: the flaming torch in Gen 15:17; the burning bush in Exod 3:2; the pillar of fire in Exod 13:21,22; 14:24; Deut 1:33; 9:3; the fire on top of Mt. Sinai in Exod 19:18; 24:17; Deut 4:11,12,15,24,33,36; 5:4,5,22,23,24,26; 9:10,15; 10:4; fire over the Tabernacle (Num 9:16); the tongues of fire as the Holy Spirit descends on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:3).

as King is in play here.<sup>68</sup> Adding to this is Wenham's argument that the formation of the Israelite tents around the Tabernacle is the same structure as the Egyptian army around Pharaoh.<sup>69</sup> Wenham points out that the Hebrew word "צָבָא" is used throughout Numbers 2 and can be translated army.<sup>70</sup> He states, "Once again the picture is of the people of God organized as an army marching towards the promised land."<sup>71</sup> Not only is God depicted as Divine Warrior but also as King. Wenham explains: "The Egyptian army under Rameses II (13<sup>th</sup> century BC) adopted this formation in camp. They camped in a square with the royal tent in the middle. Likewise, Israel's king dwelt in the centre of his armies in the tent of meeting."<sup>72</sup> From this evidence, and the "Song of Moses", it is clear that God is portrayed as the King of the Israelites. It is directly after this incident that he cuts the Mosaic Covenant with his people and the leaders and elders ascend Mt. Sinai to share in a covenant meal with the Lord. It is at this covenant meal that the description of the Lord is given to which Ezekiel alludes.

---

<sup>68</sup> Ezekiel connects to God's kingship in the exodus through the description of the Divine Presence, which directs us to the Israelites' view of God as king. Their view is most clearly seen in the "Song of Moses." Not only does Ezekiel connect to this, but John alludes to the "Song of Moses" in Revelation 15. The song itself represents a key moment of the Lord being declared king over Israel. As far as the song itself is concerned, Douglas Stuart, *Exodus*, NAC (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 346 explains, "This 'Song of the Sea' probably was the earliest-authored portion of the book of Exodus. Moses apparently composed it immediately after the deliverance that it describes (15:1), and Miriam, Moses' sister, taught it forthwith to the women of Israel (15:20–21). Later, in the process of writing the entire book of Exodus, Moses incorporated it into the narrative at this point." Both the age of the song and its concluding verse that "the Lord reigns forever" help to establish the fact that the view of God as King (i.e. the One who reigns) was prominent in Israel from this defining moment in its history (i.e. when it became its own nation) and onward. Stuart, *Exodus*, 347 points out, "So important did the song become to all generations of believers that it is described in John's great apocalyptic vision as a song to be sung even in heaven (Rev 15:3)." John's depiction of God as King will be discussed below, but it should be noted here that the verse which Stuart references also depicts God as King by stating, "ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν ἐθνῶν" ("King of the nations"). It is certainly not coincidental that John is connecting the theme of God as King to the Song of Moses. In doing so, John traces the biblical theme back to its earliest reference, and possibly the oldest written Scripture (as Stuart has claimed above), before proceeding to describe his vision of the culmination of God as King.

<sup>69</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Numbers: An Introduction & Commentary*, ed. D.J. Wiseman (TOTC 4; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981), 66. Beale uses a similar argument; see Beale, *The Temple*, 64.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

Exodus has a significant impact on Ezekiel's view of God as King, especially since it is the beginning of God being viewed as King of the Israelites.<sup>73</sup> Ezekiel, like Moses, proclaims the power of the Lord to judge those who rival his kingship.<sup>74</sup> And Ezekiel, like Moses, is sent to speak the word of the Lord to an obstinate, rebellious, and hard-hearted people who rebel against the Lord's sovereign will.<sup>75</sup> The clearest influence of Exodus on Ezekiel is found in Ezek 20:

"As I live," declares the Lord God, "surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you. And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face. As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you," declares the Lord God. And I shall make you pass under the rod, and I shall bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I shall purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I shall bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.<sup>76</sup>

The deliverance terminology that the Lord uses, "with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm," is a clear allusion to the exodus. If there was any doubt to its echo, the Lord points directly to the exodus connection by discussing the "wilderness of the land of Egypt." The end goal of the exodus and the end goal of the Lord in Ezekiel are the same: "[The Lord] shall be king over you."

---

<sup>73</sup> The parallels between Ezekiel and Moses are interesting but not within the scope of this thesis. To draw just a few: both interact with the glory of the Lord on a mountain, both are given a description of a dwelling place for the Lord, and both have given Law, something that has given Rabbis fits when trying to interpret Ezekiel. See Matthew A. Sweeney, "The Problem of Ezekiel in Talmudic Literature," in *After Ezekiel: The Reception of A Difficult Prophet*, LHBOTS 535 (eds. Andrew Mein and Paul M. Joyce; New York: T & T Clark International, 2011): 11–23.

<sup>74</sup> Ezek 25–32.

<sup>75</sup> Ezek 2:4–5.

<sup>76</sup> Ezek 20:33–38.

It has been clearly demonstrated, therefore, that Exodus contributes significantly to Ezekiel's view of God as king, which will in turn have significant impact on John's writing in Revelation. We turn there now.

### **3.3 – The Divine Presence as King in Ezekiel and Revelation**

There are a number of ways in which John alludes to Ezekiel to display the kingship of God. Below, I will examine each of the significant allusions that contribute to this tapestry. Often, John extends or applies the original meaning of Ezekiel to his vision; when this extension occurs, I will examine it as well.

#### 3.3.1 – Ezekiel and John's Visions of the Throne Room

John alludes frequently to Ezekiel when describing the throne room scene that he witnesses in Heaven. When Rev 4 is read directly after reading Ezek 1, one cannot help but notice the allusion. Before seeing the throne, both testify to the voice of the Lord being like the sound of “ὕδατων πολλῶν” (“many waters”) (Ezek 1:24; Rev 1:15).<sup>77</sup> The similarity between these throne visions begins with the description of the four living creatures before the throne (or below the throne from Ezekiel's perspective). Ezekiel describes the creatures as having four faces each where John only describes one face per creature but, acknowledging this difference, the four faces are described the same in both as one like a man (“ἄνθρωπος”), one like a lion (“λέων”), one like an eagle (“ἀετός”), and one like a calf (“μόσχος”) (Ezek 1:10; Rev 4:7).<sup>78</sup> The creatures are described by

---

<sup>77</sup> John is describing the voice of Jesus, whom, as argued above, he sees as the Lord.

<sup>78</sup> It should be noted that English translations will show variance with John's description (“ox” or “bull” instead of “calf”) but this is due to their following of the MT, which reads ὄξ (ox, bull), instead of the LXX, which reads μόσχος (“calf”) and which John follows.

both as having six wings and “full of eyes round about them” (Ezek 1:18)<sup>79</sup> or “full of eyes around and within” (Rev 4:8). Both Ezekiel and John describe seeing lightning. The difference between the two, which may be due to vantage point (because Ezekiel sees the living creatures as beneath the throne) and level of description, is that Ezekiel records seeing bright fire and torches darting back and forth from the midst of the living creatures whereas John states that the lightning and peals of thunder are coming from the throne of God itself. Both describe an awe-inducing scene. Working our way towards the throne, both see a sea of glass that is clear as crystal. Ezekiel describes this as an “expanse” but both descriptions locate this crystal clear sea/expanse underneath the throne.<sup>80</sup> The radiance around the throne is described by each to look like a rainbow (Ezek 1:28; Rev 4:3); John further adds that it was like an emerald in appearance. The throne itself is described by Ezekiel looking like lapis lazuli (a gemstone with a rich royal blue color) whereas John only informs us that it was in Heaven. John sees the One seated on the throne and compares his appearance to jasper (a rich red colored jewel) and sardius (a rich red jewel often with an orange hue that gives it a fire-like visage). John’s jewel descriptions align well with what Ezekiel portrays. Ezekiel sees the appearance of a man who “from the appearance of his loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around him” (Ezek 1:27). The sardius stone and fire like descriptions bear evidence, along with the rainbow, crystal-clear sea of glass, and four living creatures, that John and Ezekiel are testifying to a similar object in

---

<sup>79</sup> Ezekiel is describing eyes that surround the wheels of the living creatures but these eyes still belong to the creatures.

<sup>80</sup> The description recalls the covenant meal that Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders partake in with the Lord on Mt. Sinai where “they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself” (Exod 24:10).

their visions: the Lord seated on his throne in Heaven. It also demonstrates John's repeated echoing of Ezekielian imagery to describe what he is seeing.

Each of the images that Ezekiel and John describe certainly evoked a response from them and should do the same in the reader. Not only do they induce awe but they also tell us about the character of the Lord. The power in the Lord's voice like abundant waters and the blazing fire and lightning bolts with peals of thunder speaks to the Lord's omnipotence. The eyes surrounding the living creatures point to the omniscience of the Lord. The expanse or sea of glass, which is clear as crystal, demonstrates a separation due to his uniqueness or "wholly-otherness." His rainbow-like radiance and precious jewel-like descriptions, which John and Ezekiel both employ, give the idea of rarity and vivid luminescence. Ezekiel describing his likeness as "כְּמֵרָאָה אָדָם" ("like the sight of a man") bears evidence that humanity is made in his Image but that he remains unique as our Creator. The royal throne, made of precious gemstone-like material, on which the Lord is seated, and its location in Heaven depict God as the one true King. The composite of these images testifies to the Glory of the Lord and leave all who witness his Glory to fall on their faces in worship. As Ezekiel aptly summarizes and properly responds, "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. When I saw it, I fell facedown" (Ezek 1:28b).<sup>81</sup>

Ezekiel and John both witness the Glory of the enthroned Lord early in their visions.<sup>82</sup> It is from this position of the Lord seated on his throne that the visions proceed. Where John frequently reminds us that the Lord is seated on his throne in Heaven and

---

<sup>81</sup> John does the same in seeing the Glory of Jesus in Rev 1:17. The four living creatures do so in Rev 4:8 and the twenty-four elders in Rev 4:10–11.

<sup>82</sup> Ezekiel in his first chapter; John witnesses the glory of Jesus in his first chapter and documents this throne room vision in his fourth chapter.

ruling and orchestrating his plans for his creation from this vantage point,<sup>83</sup> Ezekiel does not return to discussing the throne of the Lord until his forty-third chapter. Though the reminder of this image does not occur in Ezekiel, from the outset of the book, the picture has been framed that should shape the rest of the visions: the Lord is the true King of Kings and is working out his plan as he sees fit.<sup>84</sup> The judgment on Israel and, more evidently, on the enemies of Israel – such as Edom, Moab, Philistia, Tyre, and Egypt (Ezek 25–32, 35) – demonstrates that the Lord is King over all nations. The Lord is enthroned at the beginning of each book of prophecy and he will be seen as enthroned at the end of each as well.

### 3.3.2 – The Consistent Image of the Throne throughout Revelation

As aforementioned, John frames his vision with images of the throne of God at the beginning and end. Though the throne room vision does not occur until chapter 4, John begins the Apocalypse with greetings of grace and peace coming from him who sits enthroned: “Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before his throne” (Rev 1:4). Not only is Revelation framed with discussions of the throne but the book itself is centered around the throne of God and, to a lesser extent, the throne of Satan, which unsuccessfully attempts to rival the throne of God. John uses the word *θρόνος* 47 times in just 22 chapters.<sup>85</sup> The saturation of this image of the throne of God within Revelation leads Bauckham to conclude that it

---

<sup>83</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 31 notes, “In chapter 4 God’s sovereignty is seen as it is already fully acknowledged in heaven. This establishes it as the true reality which must in the end also prevail on earth.”

<sup>84</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 57 concurs, ““Ezek 1 sets the tone for the book. The chapter is not only glory centered (emphasizing divine sovereignty) but temple directed and it is not surprising to find that the second prophetic vision of judgement has much the same emphasis.”

<sup>85</sup> For comparison, in the NT, outside of Revelation, *θρόνος* is only used fifteen times in fourteen verses: Matt 5:34; 19:28 (2x); 23:22; 25:31; Luke 1:32, 52; 22:30; Acts 2:30; 7:49; Col 1:16; Heb 1:8; 4:16; 8:1; 12:2.



is “one of the central symbols of the whole book.”<sup>86</sup> This ubiquity shows how important the display of God’s kingship is to John. John has witnessed God the Father on his throne with the four living creatures singing praise unto him (Rev 4:3–8). John has seen Jesus, the Son of God, the Davidic Shepherd, standing in the midst of the throne and appearing as a Lamb who had been slain (Rev 5:5–7). He sees the twenty-four elders who each has his own throne and they come off of their thrones to bow down at the throne of the Lord to worship God Almighty and the Lamb.<sup>87</sup> He hears of 144,000 and sees a countless multitude, representing every tongue, every tribe, and every nation, all worshipping God the Father and the Lamb (Rev 7:4–10). It is from before the throne that the Lamb opens the seven seals (Rev 6–8). It is also from before the throne that the seven angels play the seven trumpets given to them after the opening of the seventh seal (Rev 8:2–11:19). Shortly after the seventh trumpet is sounded John sees “a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars” (Rev 12:1). She is pregnant and a great fiery red dragon awaits the birth of her child to devour it. But, as soon as the child is born, John records, “and her child was caught up to God and to his throne” (Rev 12:5). After the dragon is thrown down, and his angels with him, a loud voice declares, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night” (Rev 12:10). It is discernible from v10 that this child, “who had been caught up to his throne,” is the Christ. The voice declares that the kingdom, the reign of God and his Christ, has come. John’s vision continues to center around the throne of God and Christ and their reign. In Rev 13, John discusses the

---

<sup>86</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 31.

<sup>87</sup> Worshipping God the Father: Rev 4:9–11; 7:12; 11:17–18. Worshipping God the Son: Rev 5:9–10.

rival throne of the beast but in Chapter 14 the throne of God is brought back into view as the 144,000 worship him. In Rev 15 further worship is performed by those standing on a “sea of glass” (i.e. before the throne). Chapter 16 discusses judgment poured out on the throne of the beast and its defeat. A voice then comes from the throne of God declaring, “It is done!” (Rev 16:17) The throne is not discussed in Rev 17, but the Lamb is declared to overcome, “ὅτι κύριος κυρίων ἐστὶν καὶ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων” (“because he is Lord of lords and King of kings”) (Rev 17:14). Although the throne may not be discussed, the kingship of God and the Messiah are still in full view. After the judgment on Babylon and, indirectly, on “οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς” (Rev 18:9) who followed after her, John draws our eyes up to Heaven to a great multitude worshipping at the throne of God because of his righteous judgment upon Babylon (Rev 19:1–6). They declare, “ἀλληλουῖά, ὅτι ἐβασίλευσεν κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν ὁ παντοκράτωρ” (“Hallelujah, for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!”) (Rev 19:6). John then describes Jesus as having a name written on his thigh, “Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων” (Rev 19:16). A very short description of a battle comes next with Christ being rivaled by Satan and “τοὺς βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς” (“the kings of the earth”) (Rev 19:19). The battle lasts for two verses as Satan and his followers are quickly defeated (Rev 19:20–21). Afterwards, the vision continues with a description of those beheaded because of their testimony reigning with Christ for a thousand years (Rev 20:4–6). After this period, Satan comes again rallying those from “Gog and Magog,” which is a direct allusion to Ezek 38–39.<sup>88</sup> He is quickly defeated in the timeframe of a verse, yet again (Rev 20:9). The throne of God then comes as Heaven and earth flee from its presence, and the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment

---

<sup>88</sup> We will compare Gog and Magog in both Ezekiel and John below in the section entitled “The Divine King as the Ultimate Judge of the Nations.”

occur, with the end result determined by whether one's name is written in the Book of Life (Rev 20:11–15).<sup>89</sup>

The recurrent image of the throne of God in these chapters helps to keep John's portrayal of the Divine Presence as King front and center. It is nearly to the point where one leaves it in one chapter only to find it appear again in the next. Allusions to Ezekiel are interwoven within this tapestry, including the portrayal of the grace and justness of the King in keeping his faithful subjects from his wrath by marking them as his.

### 3.3.3 – The Marking of Foreheads

It is from this position of enthronement over creation as King that the Lord issues forth his judgment on humanity. Before exacting his justice, however, the Lord sends a heavenly being ahead to mark the foreheads of those who have faithfully pledged their fealty to the King. Ezekiel and John both document this occurrence, and John is making a *clear allusion* to Ezekiel. Ezekiel records, "And the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst" (Ezek 9:4). Ezekiel does not tell us what is written on the foreheads, if anything, but that it is a "מֶתָרָ" ("mark") (9:4). This "mark" is generally regarded as "one's own mark" or a "signature confirming a document."<sup>90</sup> Perhaps, from the meaning of the mark, it can then be assumed that the Lord is putting his mark on his subjects; that is, the King is declaring who it is that belongs to his kingdom. It is a mark that shows his grace and

---

<sup>89</sup> The book of life is also referred to as the "book of life of the Lamb" (Rev 13:8). Christ is the one who has control of the book (Rev 3:5) and it was written from the foundation of the world (Rev 17:8). It is also referred to as the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev 21:27).

<sup>90</sup> William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 387.

justice in the midst of judgment. For the sovereign Lord only judges each for his own sin.<sup>91</sup> It is after this marking, in Ezek 9, that judgment comes on the land and many are slain but those who have the mark are spared. It is the mark that saves the people of God. John is more elaborate in his description of the mark and refers to it more frequently. In fact, of the fifteen times that the word μέτωπον (“foreheads”) appears in Scripture, eight of those occurrences are found in Revelation. Only two times, outside of Revelation, is μέτωπον connected with having something written on it: Ezek 9:4 and Exod 28:38. I will discuss Exod 28:38 momentarily but only after looking at what John tells us that the “mark” entails. In Rev 7:3, the mark, which is not described in detail, is given so that those bearing it will be sealed from the harming of the land and sea. In 9:4, the judgment comes on those who do not have the mark of God on their forehead. In 13:16, the enemies of God, in false imitation of God, mark their own with the number of the beast.<sup>92</sup> It must be understood that this is in response to the Lord already marking his own people. Revelation 14:1 tells us the mark that his people bear: “τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένον ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν. (“His Name [i.e. the Lamb] and the Name of his Father written on their foreheads”) (Rev 14:1). The mark is the Name of the Lord; this is further evidenced in Rev 22:4 when the people of God “shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads” (Rev 22:4). It is the Name of the Lord that is the mark written on the foreheads of the people of God in Revelation and, most likely, in Ezekiel. I mentioned above Exod 28:38 as the only other occurrence, outside of

Revelation and Ezekiel, where something being written on a forehead is discussed. It is in

---

<sup>91</sup> Ezek 18, as a whole, speaks to the idea of the Lord judging the one who sins and does not repent. It ends with a plea from the Lord: “For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,” declares the Lord God. “Therefore, repent and live.” (Ezek 18:32).

<sup>92</sup> This mark of the beast on the foreheads of those who are not the people of God is also mentioned in Rev 14:9 and 20:4. Rev 17:5 discusses what is written on the forehead of the whore of Babylon who is also an enemy of God.

regards to the nameplate on the turban of the High Priest of Israel. Exodus 28:36 provides us insight:

You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'Holy to the LORD.' And you shall fasten it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban; it shall be at the front of the turban. And it shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.<sup>93</sup>

This Scripture demonstrates, yet again, that it is the Name of the Lord that is marked on the forehead. And, here again, it is the Name of the Lord that rescues his people from his judgment as the righteous King. John's use of Ezekiel in describing the scene is a parallel allusion but provides further detail as to the meaning of the mark and its delivering of God's people from his judgment.

### 3.3.4 – For the sake of My Name

The marking of foreheads with the Name of the Lord has an interesting tie to a phrase seldom found in Scripture. “For My Name’s sake,” or a variant thereof, only appears 8 times in the OT.<sup>94</sup> Five of these eight occurrences are found in Ezekiel – 4 times in Ezek 20 and once in Ezek 36. Both chapters concern the restoration of Israel. The OT usage of the phrase is always in regards to the Lord withholding his judgment and displaying his grace. It has a direct link to Exod 34:6, as “gracious” is the first aspect of the Name of the Lord that he reveals to Moses. It must also be noted that the Lord speaks this characteristic about himself only after displaying this characteristic by not destroying the Israelites (i.e. withholding his judgment) after the Golden Calf incident for

---

<sup>93</sup> Exod 28:36.

<sup>94</sup> Is 48:9,11; 66:5; Ezek 20:9, 14, 22, 44; Ezek 36:22. In other locations within the OT prophets or the Psalms appeals are made to the Lord to do something for “your Name’s sake” but it is only in the aforementioned verses that the Lord Himself speaks of doing something for “My Name’s sake.”

the sake of his Name. It is an interesting connection to think of the Name of the Lord in Revelation being written on the foreheads of his people. It is this mark, his Name, on his people that forestalls his judgment. It means that it is yet again “for the sake of his Name” that his grace is displayed to those bearing his Name.

The New Testament use of “for My Name’s sake” takes on a shift in meaning. In all five occurrences of the phrase in the NT,<sup>95</sup> it is not in regards to the Lord withholding his judgment but refers to enduring the judgment of others for the sake of his (Jesus’) Name. John employs this phrase in Revelation in the letter to the Church at Ephesus, “And you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary” (Rev 2:3). It is too loose a connection to be considered an allusion but John is certainly picking up on a phrase the Biblical usage of which is dominated by Ezekiel. It is the Name of the Lord written on the foreheads of his people that allows them to forestall his judgment and to bear the judgment of others because both the Lord and his people are doing so for the sake of the Name of the Lord. It is a quality that the Lord requires of his subjects and the clearest way that they can demonstrate their fealty.

### 3.3.5 – The Divine King as the Ultimate Judge of the Nations

The Divine King demonstrates his sovereignty over the nations in Ezekiel in judgment of them. The primary reason for this judgment is their attempted rivaling of the kingship of God. This rivaling occurs within Judah as well as within Judah’s neighbors. I will begin with Judah (i.e. the people of God) and then move on to other nations.

---

<sup>95</sup> Matt 19:29; Lk 21:12; Jn 15:21; Acts 9:16; Rev 2:3.

The Lord pronounces judgment on Jerusalem in Ezek 16.<sup>96</sup> He speaks of Jerusalem as an unwanted baby girl, thrown out into the open field (16:4–5). The Lord found her, raised and provided for her, and made her his wife (16:6–14). In this act of marriage, the Lord places a “קִטְרֶה” (“crown”) on her head (16:12) and makes her a “מְלִיכָה” (“queen”) (16:13).<sup>97</sup> Therefore, when Jerusalem rejects the Lord, she rejects him not only as her husband but as her king. It is an outright rejection of his kingship over her and it is for this reason that the Lord brings judgment upon her. For the king is still king even when his subject disobeys him. It is for this disobedience that his righteous kingly judgment comes.<sup>98</sup>

The Lord is shown to carry out his judgment against the entire land of Israel in Ezekiel 21. The Lord tells Ezekiel to warn the people about the Lord coming in judgment with his sword. In Ezekiel 21:13, located within a section difficult to interpret,<sup>99</sup> the NIV’s rendering of the text is, to paraphrase Stuart, as good a guess as any other translation: “Testing will surely come. And what if even the scepter, which the sword

---

<sup>96</sup> Jerusalem is also reminded of the judgment that the Lord has brought on her “sisters” Samaria and Sodom (16:46,55) for similar behavior. The judgement on Jerusalem and on Samaria is a synecdoche for the Kingdom of Judah and the Kingdom of Israel, since Jerusalem and Samaria are the respective capital cities of these kingdoms; as the capital city goes, so, too, goes the country.

<sup>97</sup> Credit belongs to Block for pointing out this verse. See Block, “Transformation of Royal Ideology in Ezekiel,” in *Transforming Visions*, 210n6.

<sup>98</sup> The Lord, utilizing shepherd imagery, announces a post-exilic judgment on His people who return to the land, as well, in Ezekiel 34. He declares, “I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken, and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment. And as for you, My flock, thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats. Is it too slight a thing for you that you should feed in the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? Or that you should drink of the clear waters, that you must foul the rest with your feet? And as for My flock, they must eat what you tread down with your feet, and they must drink what you foul with your feet!’” Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them, “Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, until you have scattered them abroad, therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another” (Ezek 34:16-22). This use of shepherd imagery to depict judgment is a natural one in that not only is it a shepherd’s duty to protect his flock but the metaphor of a king, who is the ultimate judge over his people, exacting judgment is a demonstration of his justice and an exercise of his sovereignty.

<sup>99</sup> Stuart agrees. Douglas Stuart, *Ezekiel, TCC 18* (ed. Lloyd J. Ogilvie; Dallas: Word Book Publishers, 1979), 198.

despises, does not continue? declares the Sovereign LORD.”<sup>100</sup> This rendering suggests that the Lord is telling Israel that the scepter of Judah, the promise of a Davidic king who will reign forever, will not save them from the sword of the Lord. Our reason for choosing this translation is based on the reference to Gen 49:10 at the end of the chapter. Ezekiel states, “A ruin, a ruin, a ruin, I shall make it. This also will be no more, until He comes whose right it is; and I shall give it to Him” (21:27). Allen, among others,<sup>101</sup> believes this statement turns the promise of Judah on the people themselves. Because of the faithlessness of Judah, the Lord has appointed Nebuchadnezzar to reign over them. Block further states, “This is not to say that Genesis 49:10 is out of the picture. On the contrary: Ezekiel has hereby taken an ancient word, on which his audience has staked their hopes, and transformed it into a frightening picture of doom.”<sup>102</sup> The idea was still prevalent among the people of Judah that the Lord had promised David a king who will reign forever and, therefore, they falsely assumed that Judah would be exempt from the judgment of the Lord.<sup>103</sup> The doom to which Block alludes is that the Lord has now appointed Nebuchadnezzar to reign over them. The judgment of the Lord is coming through a foreign king, not of the line of David. As is often the case with OT prophecy, Nebuchadnezzar is the immediate referent (in terms of how Ezekiel is using Gen 49:10)

---

<sup>100</sup> Stuart, *Ezekiel*, 199 says of v.13, “Again very hard to understand in the Hebrew, cannot be reliably translated into English, and the attempts in the various English versions are all guesses as to the real meaning.” Block offers similar advice. See Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 672.

<sup>101</sup> Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48*, 28. Block as well (Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 692–93). Both Block and Allen base this on the work of Moran (W. Moran, “Gen 49:10 and its use in Ezek 21:32,” *Bib* 39 [1958] 405–25).

<sup>102</sup> Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 692–93.

<sup>103</sup> A similar mindset can be seen in Mic 2. The people of Judah are trusting in the promises of God rather than God himself. It is related to the similar action displayed in Jer 7 where the people believe that because they have the Temple of the Lord that they will be saved from God’s righteous judgment. Both mindsets are entirely incorrect. Even if one does not follow the idea that Judah is trusting in the promise of the Davidic reign, they are at least trusting in the image of God as their Divine Warrior. Craigie, *Ezekiel*, 158 warns, “We must all be careful of the ancient images that give us comfort, for by our evil actions and rejection of God, we can convert the images of comfort into spectres of terror.”



while the ultimate referent is still the Messiah. I will now turn to Revelation to see that the Messiah, too, comes in judgment on those who oppose his reign.

In Ezekiel, the people of God learn that not even the Davidic promises, nor the prophecy made to Judah, will save them from his coming judgment. John depicts similar scenes in Revelation of judgment coming. What is marvelous to see, especially if the Lord is asking if the people think that the scepter of Judah will save them from his sword of judgment, but even if that's not occurring in Ezek 21:13, is that Jesus the Davidic Shepherd now holds both the scepter of Judah,<sup>104</sup> as he is the ultimate fulfilment of the prophecy, and the sword of the Lord with which to judge. John picks up on this image when he describes the sword of judgment coming from the mouth of Jesus. He presents this image in multiple locations in Revelation.<sup>105</sup> Revelation 2 contains references to Jesus having both the sword and an iron scepter (2:12, 16, 27), which is a reference to the scepter of Judah. Revelation 19 shows him having both within the same verse: "And from his mouth comes a sharp sword, in order that with it he may smite the nations, and he will rule them with a scepter of iron, and he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty" (19:15).<sup>106</sup> Whatever the people of God thought that they could trust in, over the course of their history, it is now clear that the only one to put their trust in is he who holds both the scepter and the sword. Faith in him and faithfulness to him are the only things that can save one from his righteous judgment.

---

<sup>104</sup> See Rev 2:27 (Jesus, who holds the "iron scepter" gives it to those who overcome to reign with him as he reigns with his Father); Rev 12:5; Rev 19:15.

<sup>105</sup> Rev 1:16; 2:12, 16; 19:15, 21. Kowalski, "Transformation of Ezekiel in John's Revelation," 306 sees Rev 2:12 as an allusion to Ezekiel 5:1. If it is, it would be another connection between the sword of judgment in Ezekiel and the sword of judgment in Revelation. Ezekiel and John are certainly parallel in presenting an image of the judgment of the Lord coming by sword.

<sup>106</sup> My translation.

The Lord continues his display of his sovereign authority in his judgment of the nations. In Ezekiel, the Lord brings judgments against Judah's neighboring countries. Each of these countries celebrated the demise of Judah and, though Judah was not obedient to the Lord their King, they were still the people of God. The kingdom itself was ruled from the throne which had been called, at least at one point, the "throne of the Lord" (1 Chr 29:23). His Presence dwelt among them in the Temple and they, ultimately, answered to the Lord as King.<sup>107</sup> Therefore the mocking of the kingdom's destruction is seen as an affront to the Lord her King. In response, the Lord brings his judgment against Ammon, who mocked his sanctuary's destruction (Ezek 25:3), Moab, who said Judah was just like all of the other nations (25:8), Edom, who took vengeance upon them (25:12), and Philistia, who took vengeance upon them as well (25:15). Yet most of these judgments end with the Lord stating, "and they will know that I am the Lord" (Ezek 25:7, 11, 17).<sup>108</sup> They will know that He is the Lord because he alone has the power to judge the nations. He is the true King of Judah and the true King over all of the earth.

As I discussed above, the Lord uses Nebuchadnezzar to bring about his judgment on Israel. However, Nebuchadnezzar as a vehicle for the judgment of the Lord is not reserved for Israel alone. He uses Nebuchadnezzar to reveal himself as king and judge over the nations as well. The Lord tells Ezekiel that he will use Nebuchadnezzar to bring judgment on the Kingdom of Tyre (26:7). The Kingdom of Tyre is judged, like the aforementioned neighboring countries of Judah, for mocking Jerusalem and believing that her destruction would lead to its benefit (Ezek 26:2). What is telling, though, is that

---

<sup>107</sup> This can be seen in the way that the success of each king's reign was measured by his faithfulness to the Lord, as discussed in the section above, "OT Background of the Divine Presence as King."

<sup>108</sup> This ubiquitous phrase, or a variant of it, is found over seventy times in the texts of Ezekiel. Petter notes this in D.L. Petter, *Ezekiel and Mesopotamian City Laments* [PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2009], 104n497.

the king of Tyre is judged for saying of himself, “I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the heart of the seas” (Ezek 28:2).<sup>109</sup> The king of Tyre claims to be a god; this is an affront to the only true God-King. The king of Tyre, and his kingdom with him, shows himself to be an enemy to the reign of God. Therefore, God brings his judgment upon them through Nebuchadnezzar. After Nebuchadnezzar does the bidding of the Lord, whether Nebuchadnezzar was aware of this or not, the Lord then tells Ezekiel that he will give Nebuchadnezzar and his army the reward of conquering Egypt as well because of their faithfulness in carrying out the Lord’s will against Tyre (Ezek 29:17–20). Pharaoh is judged for the same reason as the king of Tyre. He states, “My Nile is mine, and I have made it” (Ezek 29:3, 9). Pharaoh’s claim is that of creator, setting himself equal to a god. Like the king of Tyre, Pharaoh attempts to rival the only true God-King. The Lord brings judgment upon him and Egypt is never the same.<sup>110</sup>

John continues in the vein of Ezekiel with this theme of Divine judgment upon the nations in Revelation. Ezekiel does it individually upon the enemies of Israel; John does so collectively on those who are the enemies of God. It is here that a structural allusion is found between the two as John follows the judgment and then lament pattern of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel, the Lord judges and punishes Tyre but then a lament is given over its destruction. The destruction of Egypt is also followed by a lament. John alludes to this pattern in his structure of Rev 17–18. The Lord brings judgment on Babylon, the symbolic kingdom that is in opposition to the Lord’s reign, and she meets her death.

---

<sup>109</sup> Ezek 28:7 is similar in describing the reason for judgment: “Because you have made your heart like the heart of God.”

<sup>110</sup> Stuart, *Ezekiel*, 282 states, “These prophecies all came about...After the Babylonian defeat, Egypt was never again a power to be reckoned with, but instead suffered repeated conquests and was subjugated to other powers, including the Persians, Greeks, and Ptolemies. The nation declined to the status of an obscure entity in the ancient world.”

Though it is not the Lord who is lamenting over the destruction of Babylon but the kings of the earth, the lamenting over Babylon echoes the lamenting over Tyre in Ezek 26.

The ultimate judgment on the nations of the earth that are opposed to the Lord is in the judgment of Gog and Magog. Ezekiel records what will take place:

You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army; and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.<sup>111</sup>

Notice that the Lord speaks of this rival nation coming against his people “in the last days.”<sup>112</sup> John makes a clear allusion to this final battle as well. It is through his judgment on Gog that the Lord declares, “I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the Lord” (Ezek 38:23). The Lord will display his omnipotence and his holiness, and, through their display, make himself known to the nations that he is the Lord. His judgment on Gog and Magog continues in the ensuing chapter with the only land in Israel that the Lord awards to Gog being a burial ground (Ezek 39:11).

In John’s vision, Satan rallies Gog and Magog and they come to oppose the Lord and his holy people. John records the brief battle in one verse, “And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them” (Rev 20:9). John clearly has Ezekiel in mind as he records this battle as the land of Gog or Magog are only mentioned in Ezekiel

---

<sup>111</sup> Ezek 38:15–16.

<sup>112</sup> This is a key phrase that usually signals an eschatological event.

and Revelation,<sup>113</sup> both of which contain a description of the two in a battle with the people of the Lord “in the last days.” It is after this brief battle and final judgment that the Lord brings his Kingdom in the form of the New Jerusalem or, as Ezekiel calls it, a city named, “The Lord is there” (Ezek 48:35).<sup>114</sup> The final judgment must take place before the coming of his Kingdom because God is judging the kingdoms that oppose his reign. Only after those rival kingdoms are disposed of can the Kingdom of God come with the New Jerusalem.<sup>115</sup> I now turn to examine the Divine Presence in that everlasting holy city.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.4 – Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter I have demonstrated that the Divine Presence is depicted as king from the earliest written portion of Scripture to the last written book of Scripture. Ezekiel and John follow in the tradition of the other biblical authors. John frequently alludes to Ezekiel with texts that depict the Divine Presence as King in Ezekiel; this helps to further display his kingship in the Book of Revelation. John utilizes Ezekiel to paint the picture of the throne of God and makes this the dominant and recurring theme of the Apocalypse. John further employs Ezekielian imagery when he shows the king marking his subjects by writing his Name on their foreheads and sparing them the forthcoming judgment for

---

<sup>113</sup> Γῳγ (“Gog”) and Μαγῳγ (“Magog”) are only mentioned in reference to a land in Ezek 38–39 and Rev 20. For mentions of Gog see Ezek 38:2,3,14,17,18; 39:1,6,11,15; Rev 20:8. For mentions of Magog see Ezek 38:2; Rev 20:8.

<sup>114</sup> Clowney, “The Final Temple,” 165 comments, “Consummation Glory burns in the name of the city, ‘The Lord is There.’”

<sup>115</sup> A similar statement is made by Mathewson. See David Mathewson, *A New Heaven and a New Earth*, 217.

<sup>116</sup> Mathewson, *A New Heaven and A New Earth*, 31, commenting on the structural similarities of John’s use of Ezekiel, states, “There is a certain linear progression evident in John’s use of Ezekiel which prepares the attentive reader for what is to come in the climactic chapters of Revelation. The reader of 21.1–22.5 is in a sense prepared in advance to look for connections with Ezek. 40–48.”

the sake of his Name. John alludes to Ezekiel when he depicts kings who want to be gods being dethroned by the only true God-King. Those opposed to the kingdom of God are not long for this world, since the Kingdom of God will be the only world in existence as the everlasting holy city descends. With its coming, it is important to keep in mind that the kingship of God has been thoroughly displayed, predominantly with throne and judgment imagery, throughout Ezekiel and Revelation up to this point. Where the two differ,<sup>117</sup> in terms of the Divine Presence as King, is that John includes Jesus Christ, the Davidic Shepherd, within his description of the Divine Presence. This changes the landscape of the everlasting holy city, as we will see in the next chapter, when John discusses God Almighty and the Lamb reigning from the throne (singular) in the New Jerusalem. Because 1) Jesus is the fulfillment of the promised Davidic Shepherd and is the Divine Presence and 2) the Divine Presence is King, we, therefore, see that the Davidic Shepherd is actually not only the expected human king who was to be a Son of David and to reign on his throne forever but is also the Divine King. We now turn to discuss his reign in the New Jerusalem.

---

<sup>117</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE DIVINE KING IN THE NEW JERUSALEM

I have demonstrated so far that the Davidic Shepherd is the Divine King,<sup>118</sup> both identities which John portrays as being fulfilled in Jesus. As the final visions of both Ezekiel and John are the climax of each book, with what was anticipated now becoming reality, and as both depict all of creation being located in one sacred space, a city called “The Lord is There” for Ezekiel and a city called the “New Jerusalem” for John, the questions that remain to be explored are: What is the relationship between John’s final vision and Ezekiel’s final vision? What will the reign of the Divine Davidic King look like in this everlasting city? What will the city itself look like as he fully reigns over it? And what will his relationship to his subjects be like? We now turn to the coming of his fully inaugurated Kingdom.

### 4.1 – The Relationship between Ezek 40–48 and Rev 21–22

John’s portrayal of the Davidic Shepherd as Divine King in the New Jerusalem is based on his use of Ezekiel; therefore, it is imperative that the relationship between these two sections be made evident. I will endeavor to make this strong relationship clear below.

The later portion of Ezekiel, chapters 40–48,<sup>119</sup> and the last two chapters of Revelation are focused on what takes place in the eschaton.<sup>120</sup> Not only is the topic the

---

<sup>118</sup> As I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, the Divine Presence is seen by John to be King in Revelation (as well as in Ezekiel). I will therefore use “Divine King” synonymously with Divine Presence from now on because the Divine Presence is depicted as King and is, therefore, the Divine King. I will also use the term “Divine Davidic King,” which just emphasizes the fact that the Davidic Shepherd is the Divine King as both are located in Jesus the Lord.

<sup>119</sup> A strong case could be made for seeing this section extended to include chapters 37–39 if one sees the Spirit entering the Valley of Dry Bones as the final resurrection and the battle against Gog and Magog as

same but so is the structure, as John models the structure of chapters 21–22 on Ezekiel 40–48.<sup>121</sup> Some have argued that Ezekiel’s vision was to be implemented after the return from exile and, therefore, can be seen as a failure.<sup>122</sup> A careful reading of the text, however, shows that Ezekiel is never commanded to build this temple or even to have others build it but is only told to write down what he has seen. If one looks at the parallel with the tabernacle at Sinai,<sup>123</sup> it is evident that the Lord’s direction in its implementation is missing from the vision of Ezekiel.<sup>124</sup> Instead, what is given to Ezekiel is a vision of a temple that the Lord himself has constructed. The מֶלֶךְ (“prince”) whom Ezekiel speaks of as the Davidic Servant in Chapter 37 and then as the one who provides the offerings for the priests in chapters 40–48, as the same individual is being described,<sup>125</sup> has now been revealed to be Jesus the Messiah. We must continue to keep before us that John’s vision is the Revelation of Jesus the Messiah. What John sees is the same vision that Ezekiel saw, in terms of its documenting the end of the world with the Divine Presence coming down to dwell among his creation forever, but furthered in its revelation by the fact that the Davidic Shepherd is come and is now currently reigning from his Father’s right side. When discussing Ezek 40–48, one must be careful with dubbing Jesus the

---

the final judgment of the nations. For the purposes of our study, they have been separated to begin with the Kingdom coming down, but the inclusion of chapters 37–39 remains a valid option.

<sup>120</sup> Ezekiel is not the only influence on John in these final two chapters. Just as he has been doing throughout the book, John draws from many different parts of Scripture to describe this final scene. Mathewson, *A New Heaven and A New Earth*, 234 points to Isa 40–66 and Zech 14 as significant influences here as well.

<sup>121</sup> Supported by Moyise, *The Old Testament*, 67–68; Mathewson, *A New Heaven and A New Earth*, 234; Kowalski, “Transformation of Ezekiel in John’s Revelation,” 295 who sees Ezekiel’s influence extended, “The structure of Rev 18–22 runs parallel to Ezek 37–48. Such a replication of the structure of an OT text in its linear order is unique in the entire Bible.”

<sup>122</sup> As discussed in the “Literature Review” section.

<sup>123</sup> Both the construction of the Tabernacle (Exod 25:8) and the construction of the Temple (1 Chr 28:6 cf. 2 Sam 7:13; 1 Kgs 5:5) are done so with the Lord ordering them to be built. He also chooses Bezalel and Oholiab work on the Tabernacle (Exod 31:1–6) and Solomon to be the one in charge of building the Temple (1 Chr 28:6).

<sup>124</sup> Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 505 also points out the lack of instruction to build the temple that Ezekiel sees.

<sup>125</sup> The debate on whether the “prince” of chapters 40–48 is the same as the “prince” of Chapter 37 will be addressed in footnote 156.



fulfilment of the prophecies of Ezekiel without qualifying the statement. Jesus, indeed, is the fulfillment of the prophecies of Ezekiel, but we are in an intermediate state of that fulfillment – a now-but-not-yet period. Jesus fulfills the prophecies and, as I will demonstrate, is the *true* temple of the Lord and reigning king. While the truth of these statements should not be in doubt, what remains is the time before the full inauguration of the Kingdom of God. The revelation that John is receiving is based on what Jesus has accomplished and the trajectory on which creation is now headed. So John, in fact, sees Jesus as the fulfillment of these prophecies, but the full fulfillment of them has yet to be realized as the Lord is transcendent (outside of time) but humanity is very much stuck within time.

#### 4.1.1 – The Beginning of the Final Prophecies of Ezekiel and John

The beginning of the final prophecies of Ezekiel and John give further evidence of the relationship between Ezek 40–48 and Rev 21–22. As the overlap is demonstrated here and will continue to be acknowledged throughout both visions, it will further display the eschatological nature of Ezek 40–48 and, more importantly, that John himself viewed it as eschatological and, therefore, made allusions to it in the midst of his eschatological vision. Acknowledgement of its eschatological nature is fundamental to the way that he utilizes it throughout his final two chapters.

The concluding vision given to Ezekiel and the concluding of the vision given to John begin in similar fashion. Ezekiel records, “In the fourteenth year after the city was taken, on that same day the hand of the Lord was upon me and he brought me there. In the visions of God he brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high

mountain, and on it to the south there was a structure like a city” (40:1–2).<sup>126</sup> The Lord reveals something to Ezekiel in “visions of God,” a description similar to the way that other visions of Ezekiel have started, but this one differs in that the Lord brings him from his exile in Babylon into the land of Israel and places him on a very high mountain with “כְּמִבְנֵה עִיר” (“a structure like a city”) on its southern side. Ezekiel does not venture to call it a city in the ordinary sense as it is unlike any other city he has ever seen. I will review the measurements and description of the grand city-like structure later but, for now, I will compare this currently unnamed city with John’s vision of the New Jerusalem.

John records witnessing Heaven and Earth pass away and the Lord declaring, “Behold, I am making all things new” (Rev 21:5). He then records, “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God” (Rev 21:10-11b). The Lord brings John from his exile on Patmos and places him “ἐπὶ ὄρος μέγα καὶ ὑψηλόν” (“on a great and high mountain”), which is very similar to the LXX in Ezek 40:2: “ἐπ’ ὄρους ὑψηλοῦ σφοδρά” (“on an exceedingly high mountain”). It is a *clear allusion* to Ezekiel. On top of this mountain John, like Ezekiel, is able to see a city unlike any other city that he has seen before because the “first earth [had already] passed away” (Rev 21:1). John sees “the holy city” and he knows its name: New Jerusalem. How does he know that its name is New Jerusalem? Yes, it was most likely revealed to him, but what is the only city in the world to house the Divine Presence in a special way previously? John then informs us of the unique characteristic of this holy city: he describes it as “having the glory of God” (Rev 21:11).

---

<sup>126</sup> Dumbrell, *Search for Order*, 103 states, “The cosmic character of the temple vision is revealed by its delivery on a very high mountain upon which the new temple will itself be situated (40:2). Though unnamed, the mountain is clearly depicted as Mount Zion.”

John is witnessing a similar vision to Ezekiel's, but John has access to more detail than Ezekiel. Reading these sections side-by-side makes it hard to see Ezek 40–48 as anything but eschatological. They are both privileged to see, by the Spirit of the Lord, the holy city of God from a mountain-top view, a city filled with the Divine Presence, and we are privileged to read their documentation of these visions. I will examine their significantly similar details below.

#### **4.2 – The Divine King Tabernacling Among His Peoples in the New Jerusalem**

In Rev 21, we see the Divine King coming to dwell among his peoples. The source of the announcement that the Kingdom of God is coming down is a voice “from the throne.” John records, “καὶ ἤκουσα φωνῆς μεγάλης ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου λεγούσης· ἰδοὺ ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ σκηνώσει μετ’ αὐτῶν, καὶ αὐτοὶ λαοὶ αὐτοῦ ἔσονται, καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς μετ’ αὐτῶν ἔσται αὐτῶν θεός.” (“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling of God is with humanity, and he shall tabernacle with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them and be their God.’”) (Rev 21:3). John uses the noun and cognate verb form (“σκηνώω”) of the word “σκηνὴ” (“dwelling, tabernacle”). If a single word can serve as a theological lodestar, then σκηνὴ/σκηνώω and its Hebrew equivalent *ḥānān/ḥānā* would be one of those words.<sup>127</sup> Each of the five times σκηνώω appears in the New Testament,<sup>128</sup> it is utilized to describe God dwelling or tabernacling among his people. It should be noted that the richness of the word comes from the Dwelling Presence of God. God is not signaling

<sup>127</sup> Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, 140 explains the connection between the Greek and Hebrew: The Greek words which 21:3 uses for ‘dwelling’ (skēnē) and ‘dwell’ (skēnoō) are those which Jewish Greek used as virtually transliterations of the Hebrew *mishkān* and *shākan*, used in the OT of God’s presence in the tabernacle and the temple.” Therefore, they have a one-to-one correspondence.

<sup>128</sup> John 1:14; Rev 7:15; 12:12; 13:6; 21:3.

back to the Tabernacle but to his Presence which dwelt in the Tabernacle.<sup>129</sup> The Tabernacle received its name from the indwelling Presence of God. Therefore, when the word is employed in places like John 1:14 or Rev 21:3, its utilization points to the relationship of God dwelling with his people, which is a relationship, however strained at times, as old as humanity itself. The initial dwelling of God among his people in Eden was short lived. After the fall, the scarlet thread running through Scripture is how mankind can be reconciled to God so that he may dwell among them again. In the Book of Leviticus, the Lord promises, “וְנִתְּנִי מִשְׁכְּנִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם” (“I will put My dwelling place in your midst.”)<sup>130</sup> Given that this promise takes place after the Lord has filled the Tabernacle with his Glory (Exod 40),<sup>131</sup> he must have something more in mind than his dwelling in the Holy of Holies among his people where he is accessible once a year, on the Day of Atonement, by the High Priest.<sup>132</sup> The Gospel of John shows the beginning of the fulfilment of this promise when he records that the Word, in reference to Jesus the Messiah, which was with God and was God, “became flesh and dwelt (‘ἐσκήνωσεν’ from ‘σκηνώω’) among us” (1:14).<sup>133</sup> Here in Revelation, John records the culmination of this thread. He does so with an allusion to Ezekiel.

---

<sup>129</sup> Edmund P. Clowney, “The Final Temple,” *WTJ* 35 (1972): 158 asserts, “Scripture continually shows that the presence of God comes first. God first reveals himself to the patriarchs and then they build altars; he appears at the bush and on the mount before the tabernacle is constructed. This is the contrast between Babel and Bethel: the stairway of human temple-building and the stairway of God by which he comes down to reveal himself to Jacob.”

<sup>130</sup> Lev 26:11a. My translation.

<sup>131</sup> 1 Kgs 8 records a similar scenario when the Divine Presence fills the Temple. Beale, *The Temple*, 111 draws a similar conclusion: “While Leviticus 26 and Ezekiel 37 could be read as prophesying God’s tabernacling presence in a temple structure, it is just as possible, if not preferable, to understand them as foretelling a time when the temple will be, not a physical handmade house, but God’s manifest presence alone that will fill Israel (and the earth) as never before.”

<sup>132</sup> Per the instructions given in Lev 16.

<sup>133</sup> This point is bolstered if one holds to Johannine authorship of Revelation.

Ezekiel, standing on the exceedingly high mountain overlooking the holy city, sees the “glory of the God of Israel coming from the east” (Ezek 43:2a).<sup>134</sup> It is in direct fulfillment of the Lord’s promise, “והָיָה מִשְׁכְּנִי עֲלֵיהֶם וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי” (“And My dwelling place will be over them and I will be their God and they will be My people”).<sup>135</sup> The Lord is coming to dwell with his people.<sup>136</sup> Ezekiel states that it is a vision similar to when the Lord came in judgment, but he comes for a different purpose this time, as Ezekiel soon finds out. Ezekiel records that “וְקוֹלֹךָ כְּקוֹל מַיִם רַבִּים וְהָאֲרֶץ הִאֲרָה” (“And his voice was like the sound of many waters and the Earth shined with his glory”).<sup>137</sup> It is a description that recalls the promise in Isaiah, “They will not hurt or

<sup>134</sup> Christopher Wright, *Ezekiel*, 334 notes, “the direction of movement is precisely opposite from the line of departure of the glory from the temple and city in chapters 10–11 (10:4–5, 18–19; 11:23). From his vantage point Ezekiel sees what he has longed to see since that terrible day – the glory of the Lord filled the temple. The dark days of divine abandonment are over. The king has come home.”

<sup>135</sup> Ezek 37:27 (my translation). In regards to Ezekiel’s use of the preposition עַל (“over”), Beale, *The Temple*, 112n69 observes, “The unique use in Ezekiel [of the preposition ‘al] appears to suggest that God’s latter-day presence will become equated with the tabernacle and that it will extend not merely in the midst of but ‘over’ all his people.”

<sup>136</sup> This is the culmination of the Lord’s desire to make himself known to his people. The movement of Ezekiel, as a whole, is from the promise of God making Himself known to Israel and all of the other nations (ch. 1–39), to describing the place where He will dwell with His people forever (ch. 40–48). The prophet concludes with God being known among those dwelling in the city to the extent that the very name of the city is based on the Lord’s Presence: “And the name of the city from that time on will be: The LORD is there” (Ezek 48:35).

The Lord, through Ezekiel, makes clear his desire to be made known by Israel and by the nations throughout the book. In fact, the Lord speaks of a time in the future when the nations (including Israel) will know Him as Lord on 74 different occasions in ch. 1–39. The frequency with which the Lord speaks of making himself known increases significantly between ch. 34–39. It is here, in these promise-saturated chapters, that we begin to hear of the Lord sending his Spirit to dwell within his people and make his name known in the midst of his people (Ezek 36:27). It is from here that the prophecy moves into a description of the Lord dwelling among his people in an eschatological temple-city. The Hebrew word used during these 74 instances of God declaring that he will be known is the word יָדַע. יָדַע is a word already containing a connotation of intimacy. The depth to which they will know God is made further intimate by the idea of the Spirit of God dwelling within his people. Not only does this show the incredible privilege afforded to the people of God in the last days but it truly reveals the heart of God: God wants to be known on an extremely intimate level by his people, which includes the nations as well as Israel. He makes a point of stating this 74 times. Many of these occurrences are found in what is considered a prophetic formula, “and they will know that I am the Lord.” But we should be careful to make sure that our terminology does not take away from the meaning or intention of the phrase. It’s prolific use in Ezekiel (three times as many appearances than the rest of the OT combined) does, indeed, signal a pattern but it also communicates a message: the Lord desires to make himself known to humanity. It is a picture of the very heart of God; a heart that His people will finally begin to truly know in the eschaton.

<sup>137</sup> Ezek 43:2b (my translation). Translation per BDB, p. 21, s.v. אור.

destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (11:9).<sup>138</sup> In Ezekiel’s theophany, the Lord causes the earth to radiate with his Glory. He states, “בֵּן־אָדָם אֶת־מְקוֹם כִּסְאִי וְאֶת־מְקוֹם כַּפּוֹת רַגְלֵי אֲשֶׁר אֶשְׁכֵּן־שָׁם (“Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel forever.”)<sup>139</sup> We see “שֶׁכֶן” embedded within the midst of this promise as well. The Lord tells Ezekiel that “He will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel forever.” John’s vision sketches a similar event with corresponding language, demonstrating a *clear allusion*,<sup>140</sup> stating that the Lord “will dwell among them” (Rev 21:3). In fact, not only does John allude to Ezekiel but he expands on Ezekiel by providing further detail than Ezekiel does as to how the Divine King is going to come dwell in the midst of his people forever. Ezekiel records the Lord saying that He will dwell in the midst of His people but, after this, Ezekiel is told by the Lord to “describe the temple to the House of Israel” (Ezek 43:10). Ezekiel then carries on with a temple description before moving on to required sacrifices in the temple, the prince, the river of life, the allotment of the land, and a description of the city (43:13–48:24). Little else is given as to the details of the Lord dwelling among his people besides the fact that the city, which the Presence of the Lord resides in, will be called, “יְהוָה שָׁמָּה” (“The Lord is There”) (Ezek 48:35). John is able to extend on what Ezekiel has stated because the Lord, by his Spirit, communicates through John as he did with Ezekiel but gives John a clearer picture of what is to take place. Therefore, John is not changing the meaning of Ezekiel’s vision but expanding upon it. Beale explains, “If one

---

<sup>138</sup> Similarly in Hab 2:14.

<sup>139</sup> Ezek 43:7. My translation.

<sup>140</sup> G.K. Beale and Sean McDonough, “Revelation,” 1151. David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, WBC 52c (Dallas: Word Books, 1998), 1122–1123 states, “This is almost certainly an allusion to Ezek 37:27.”

presupposes the existence of God and includes God as author of particular biblical texts and of the whole canon, then specific expansions of earlier texts in later ones is part of one complex authorial act of communication (which best represents a summary of a viable view of *sensus plenior*).”<sup>141</sup>

One further note, which is speculative in nature, must be made in regards to John’s allusion to Ezek 43:7. John changes the language slightly. Instead of λαός (“people”) he uses λαοὶ (“peoples”). Aune sees this portion of the verse as an echo of Zech 2:11; He states, “It is probable that since “many nations” are mentioned in Zech 2:11, Rev 21:3 should read λαοὶ, “peoples,” rather than simply λαός, “people.””<sup>142</sup> Based on Aune, this would then be a mixed allusion, something not uncommon for John to do. What is interesting is that Zech 2:11 mentions “ἔθνη” (“nations”), which is a word that has the connotation of nationhood and is equivalent to the Hebrew word “גוֹי”,<sup>143</sup> which carries the same connotation.<sup>144</sup> The change triggers one to ask why John intentionally pluralizes the word, in echoing Zech 2:11, but leaves it as “λαοὶ” (“peoples”) instead of “ἔθνη” (“nations”). It is my suggestion, that John, who is both thoughtful and intentional in his method, does so to trigger Zech for the purpose of showing diverse people groups who no longer exist as separate nations (though they are different ‘peoples’) but have been united under the nationhood of the Kingdom of God and under its ruler, the Divine Presence.

---

<sup>141</sup> Beale, “Questions of Authorial Intent,” 165.

<sup>142</sup> Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1123. Every other time the covenant formula is mentioned in Scripture, it’s with a singular ‘people,’ which has caused many to consider the plural in Rev 21:3 a mistake.

<sup>143</sup> BDAG, s.v. ἔθνος.

<sup>144</sup> As we will discuss below, with the support of Block, in the section entitled, “Royal Terminology in Ezekiel and Revelation.”

### 4.3 – Descriptions of the New Jerusalem

Understanding what the city of the Divine Davidic King looks like will enable us to further understand his reign and his relationship to his subjects. We turn now to John's description of the eschatological holy city, which is a description heavily influenced by Ezekiel.

#### 4.3.1 – Taking Measurements

Ezekiel and John are both given specific measurements. In fact, John is given a measuring rod and told “Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it” (Rev 11:1b). However, the next scene comes upon John so quickly that he either doesn't record what he measured or he fails to take measurements. John, like Ezekiel, does record the measurements given him in his concluding vision. Even the taking of measurements shows the overlap between John and Ezekiel. The only times that the combination of μέτρον (“measure”) and κάλαμος (“reed, rod”) occur are in Ezekiel (40:3, 5, 42:16, 17, 18, 19) and Revelation (21:15); these two books also contain the only use of the term κάλαμος in regards to measuring (Ezek 40:3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 41:8, 42:12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20; Rev 11:1, 21:15, 16). It is further evidence of John's use of Ezekiel and his taking on of the identity of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel describes “a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze” (40:3) and “in the man's hand was a measuring rod of six cubits, each of which was a cubit and a handbreadth” (40:5). The man leads Ezekiel around while measuring the gates, walls, courtyards and other aspects of the city (40:5–49). They then proceed into the temple where Ezekiel records the many measurements that the man takes (Ezek 41–



42). After the measuring is finished, the man leads Ezekiel to the east gate to witness the Glory of the Lord approaching and then filling the Temple (Ezek 43:1–5). The measurements of the New Jerusalem that John records aren't nearly as thorough as the man with Ezekiel.<sup>145</sup> I will compare John's measurements with Ezekiel's when I discuss the Divine Presence as the Temple. For now, the evidence above helps us to conclude a few things about the two prophets and their visions: (1) John is following in the line of Ezekiel; no other prophets in Scripture share the similarity of using a measuring rod. (2) The measurements show that John and Ezekiel both have visions of concrete locations. (3) Neither is instructed to build anything that he sees. (4) The precise measurements signal the precision of the Divine Davidic King in implementing his reign. (5) These measurements also have significant meaning, which I will discuss below. However, I will first look at what follows John's measuring of the city.

#### 4.3.2 – Precious Jewels that Connect John with Ezekiel and Point Back to Eden

After recording the measurements of the New Jerusalem, John goes on to describe the beauty of the city, its foundation, and its structure. He describes, “The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl” (Rev

---

<sup>145</sup> John records the measurements in three verses (Rev 21:15–17) whereas Ezekiel records measurements over a series of three chapters (Ezek 40–42).

21:19–21a).<sup>146</sup> It is a description that echoes Ezekiel’s description of Eden in the midst of a judgment prophecy on Sidon: “You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering.” Ezekiel goes on to list precious stones; those that also appear in John’s vision are jasper, emerald, sardius (also called “ruby” but both are from “σάρδιον”), chrysolite, topaz, and amethyst.<sup>147</sup> Half of the jewels that John describes align with Ezekiel. John’s description connects us to Ezekiel who connects us to Eden. Both John and Ezekiel are describing a place of perfection and a city replete with the Glory of God. In fact, just as the whole earth radiated the Glory of God in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek 43:2), John describes the city as “having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper” (Rev 21:11a). Bauckham connects this description to the description of the Glory of God in Rev 4:3 and explains, “John probably means that the whole city, with its radiant jewels and its translucent gold (21:18, 21), shines with the reflected glory of God himself (cf. 21:23).”<sup>148</sup> The reflection of the glory of the Lord illuminating the holy city in the visions of both Ezekiel and John serves as another *clear allusion* that John makes to Ezekiel and as another example of the depth to which John utilizes Ezekiel in his final vision. The glory of the Lord being reflected in even the gates and walls of the city also gives hope to the subjects of the Divine Davidic King in that if even the inanimate objects are reflecting his glory and pointing to an edenic state, then it is likely that his people will have a similar experience.

---

<sup>146</sup> The twelve names of the apostles are located on the foundations of the New Jerusalem. Bauckham, *Theology*, 137 points to the connection that Ezekiel and John both depict the city with the twelve gates having the names of the twelve tribes of Israel (Ezek 48:30–34, Rev 21:12) as well as John describing the names of the twelve apostles on the foundations and concludes that “the history of both Israel and the church comes to fulfillment in the New Jerusalem.”

<sup>147</sup> These similar jewels are found in the LXX version of Ezekiel. John’s allusion is clear when looking at the Greek.

<sup>148</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 134.

### 4.3.3 – Restrictions within the city

Ezekiel and John both hear restrictions set on the population within the holy city. Ezekiel records, “Thus says the Lord God, “No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary” (Ezek 44:9). It is interesting what this text demonstrates. First, the Lord cares more about circumcision of the heart than of the flesh.<sup>149</sup> And, second, there are assumed to be many foreigners among Israel at this time.

In the interval between the prophecies of Ezekiel and John, Jesus the Messiah, Ezekiel’s Davidic Shepherd, has come and the restriction has changed slightly but the heart of it has been maintained. Paul tells us that “they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel” (Rom 9:6). Therefore, it is not heritage that will save, it is about the circumcision of the heart; this is a requirement in Ezekiel’s restrictions but it is not specifically addressed to Israel as it is in Paul’s letter to the Romans. The question of who, then, constitutes Israel is answered by Paul as well, “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise” (Gal 3:29). These two statements help to clarify the restriction that John records in Revelation. He states, “and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev 21:27). The requirement is to have your name in the Lamb’s book of life, which requires persevering faith in Jesus.<sup>150</sup> It is faith in Jesus that makes one a part of the true Israel, therefore

---

<sup>149</sup> This has always been the case as demonstrated by Deut 30:6 among other passages. Physical circumcision was meant to be a sign that an inward circumcision of the heart had taken place (i.e. the beginning of a faith relationship with the Lord).

<sup>150</sup> As explained in Rev 3:5: “He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” True faith in Jesus is demonstrated by not succumbing to the forces who are opposed to Christ and to His

fulfilling the restriction given in Ezekiel, and allows one's name to be written in the book of life, therefore fulfilling the restriction given in Revelation. While restrictions on who can enter the temple or a certain city are not exclusive to Ezekiel and Revelation, their presence still demonstrates an overlap between Ezekiel and John. These restrictions also reflect the Davidic Shepherd's role of separating out those sheep who do not belong to him (Ezek 34:22; cf. John 10:3, 14, 26–27). The New Jerusalem will only be populated by those who are considered part of his flock.

#### 4.3.4 – A Change in the Landscape: The Divine Presence as the Temple

More than half of Ezekiel's last vision is dedicated to the temple, discussing its dimensions, its altar, who is allowed to make the sacrifices, and who will provide the offerings. In regards to the New Jerusalem, John records, "And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple" (Rev 21:22). Given the extent to which Ezekiel and John align in these eschatological visions, the omission of a temple in John's vision leaves one with the question of "why?" Beale has offered a thorough argument explaining the answer to this very question. I will summarize Beale's argument below as it is both cogent and correct.

Beale's thesis for *The Temple and the Church's Mission* is one that proffers an answer for God's motive for having no physical temple in the New Jerusalem.<sup>151</sup> While

---

reign (as the throne of Satan demonstrates). For other sections where the book of life is mentioned, see Rev 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15.

<sup>151</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, 25 states, "My thesis is that the Old Testament tabernacle and temples were symbolically designed to point to the cosmic eschatological reality that God's tabernacling presence, formerly limited to the holy of holies, was to be extended throughout the whole earth. Against this background, the Revelation 21 vision is best understood as picturing the final end-time temple that will fill the entire cosmos. If correct, the thesis provides not only the answer to the above problem in chapter 21, but also gives crucial insight into an understanding of the biblical theology of the temple in both testaments."

one may argue with the motive that Beale suggests, the conclusions that Beale makes are so concrete and well-argued that there is little room, if any, to argue for an alternative as to what has come in the New Jerusalem.

Beale first argues that Jesus Christ, whom I have already demonstrated to be the Divine Presence, is the true temple and that he demonstrated this during his ministry.<sup>152</sup> Jesus took on the role of offering forgiveness for sin (Luke 7:49–50), which was one function of the temple.<sup>153</sup> The temple functioned on the Levitical system of sacrifice and offered atonement of sin through the offering of the blood of animals (Lev 17:11). “But now Jesus has become the divinely instituted location where forgiveness is to be found, since he himself is also the sin offering.”<sup>154</sup> Two connections to Ezekiel are also made here. The first is that Ezekiel speaks of a “נָשִׂיךְ” (“prince”), the same prince whom he spoke about in reference to the Davidic Servant,<sup>155</sup> who will be responsible for providing all of the offerings in this holy city (45:17). The prince himself is not the one to offer

---

<sup>152</sup> Clowney 1972: 177, 182–183, quoted by Beale, *The Temple*, 297 expounds, “It is not so much that Christ fulfils what the temple means; rather Christ is the meaning for which the temple existed. Christ is the true temple, the true light, the true manna, the true vine. The coming of the true supersedes the figurative. The veil of the temple made with hands is destroyed, for its symbolism is fulfilled.”

<sup>153</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, 177.

<sup>154</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, 177. The author of Hebrews also attests this in Heb 9:13–10:18.

<sup>155</sup> I see no need to distinguish the “prince” of Ezek 37 from the “prince” of Ezek 44–48 as it seems likely that the prince who is to unite Israel and Judah and reign forever among them would be the same prince being described as providing the offerings for the people as he is their leader by the Lord’s granted authority. On the continuation of the same prince from Ezek 40–48 and 33–37, J.D. Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48*, HSM 10 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976), 75 states, “There is no compelling reason to assume that what is depicted in those nine chapters is an interregnum under a civil governor until the advent of the era of cosmic salom predicted in chs. 33–37. On the contrary, chs. 40–48 constitute a more detailed and normative exposition of the eschatology outlined in the earlier chapters. They are a serious effort to imagine and to mandate the consummation of all history, a consummation which is necessarily messianic, within the boundaries of the limited monarchic theology characteristic of chs. 1–37, a theology whose king is a messianic nasi.” Block points out the difficulties in the two, primarily that the prince is not referred to as Davidic or has any Messianic description surrounding him; especially when the Messiah is usually described in “glorious idealistic terms” (Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 503-05). But Daniel Block, *Beyond the River Chebar: Studies in Kingship and Eschatology in the Book of Ezekiel* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013), 92–94 does not rule out the possibility either. He seems content to describe the role of the prince in Ezek 40–48, the possible difficulties in uniting the two, and leave it at that. While his concerns are noteworthy, they do not negate that the two could be the same (he himself does not negate this).

them but is the one to provide them. Jesus, who is the fulfillment of the promised prince, as the Davidic Servant, also provides all of the necessary offerings for atonement in this eschatological holy city: himself on the cross. He who was to provide the offerings provided himself. The second connection to Ezekiel is that Jesus also foreshadows his sacrificial death when alluding to Ezekiel's Davidic Shepherd. He declares, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep...No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father" (John 10:11,18).<sup>156</sup> With this statement, Jesus hints at his death and resurrection; the very thing that makes his ability to forgive sin possible.

Jesus further demonstrates himself as the true temple through claiming himself to be greater than the temple (Matt 12:6).<sup>157</sup> Beale concludes, "Therefore, not only is Jesus identified with the temple because he is assuming the role of the sacrificial system, but he is also now, instead of the temple, the unique place on earth where God's revelatory presence is located. God is manifesting his glorious presence in Jesus in a greater way than it was ever manifested in a physical temple structure."<sup>158</sup> The most substantial of Jesus' claims that demonstrate that he is replacing the temple comes in John 2. Jesus declares, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). John informs us that Jesus is speaking of his own body, which is true, but Jesus is also making a statement about the true temple. Beale elucidates, "Jesus' statement about destroying and raising up the temple was a double entendre: on one level he was speaking of the old

---

<sup>156</sup> It is an authority granted to Jesus by God the Father as is his role as Davidic Shepherd has been given to him by God (Ezek 34:23).

<sup>157</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, 178.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

temple that he would tear down and raise up in new form, though he also had in mind the destruction of his own body as a temple that would be raised up again.”<sup>159</sup> A sure sign that Jesus has superseded the temple is the tearing of the veil, which sectioned off the Holy of Holies, at the death of Jesus on the cross. With Jesus’ death comes the spiritual death of the temple.<sup>160</sup> With his resurrection comes the completed form of the eternal temple. Now, through Jesus alone comes forgiveness of sins as he is the true sin offering as well as the great High Priest as well as the true temple of God. It is through Jesus that each person has access to the Presence of God by the Holy Spirit, an access greater than that which the former Solomonic Temple provided but not anything close to what will be experienced when the New Jerusalem comes. We turn there now.

I previously examined the measurement-taking that both Ezekiel and John record. In Ezekiel’s measurement for the Holy of Holies, he records, “He measured its length, twenty cubits, and the width, twenty cubits, before the nave; and he said to me, ‘This is the most holy place’” (Ezek 41:4). It is identical to the measurements of the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s Temple (2 Chr 3:8).<sup>161</sup> Ezekiel does not record its height but we can assume that it is also twenty cubits since it aligns with Solomon’s Temple in length and width. John’s city contains no temple but its measurements are also cubic in nature: “and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal” (Rev 21:16). Beale believes that this cubic measurement is intentionally signaling the Holy of Holies. His argument is well supported. He argues that the New Jerusalem is the expanded version of the Holy of Holies, expanded now to fill all of

---

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 193.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid. Beale also points out that the physical death of the temple came at the hands of the Romans in AD 70.

<sup>161</sup> 1 Kgs 6:20 is similar but also informs us that the height was twenty cubits as well.

creation.<sup>162</sup> It is first made evident that this is the case with the fact that the Presence of God has come to dwell among all of his people and not just to be located in one room within a temple. Second, Beale points out the connections with streets of the New Jerusalem being made of gold and the fact that the only room in the OT “which was paved with gold on the walls, floor and ceiling (so 1 Kgs 6:20–22; 2 Chr 3:4–8)”<sup>163</sup> was the Holy of Holies. The final line of argument is that each person will bear the Name of the Lord on his or her forehead and the only person who did so in the OT was the High Priest, who was the only one allowed access into the Holy of Holies, the dwelling of the Divine Presence, once a year on the Day of Atonement.<sup>164</sup>

I find Beale’s argument to be conclusive. The Holy of Holies has become the everlasting holy city. Therefore, John extends the imagery of Ezekiel by displaying the temple as equivalent to the entire city.<sup>165</sup> Free and unrestricted interaction with the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb is now made available to the people of God on this descending holy mountain that contains the temple-city of God.<sup>166</sup> Beale states, “Therefore, Hebrews 12:22–28 says that believers have begun to participate in an unshakeable mountain, temple and kingdom, which are different images for the same one reality of God’s glorious kingship in a new creation.”<sup>167</sup>

---

<sup>162</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, 369–70.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 370.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Mathewson, *A New Heaven and New Earth*, 219.

<sup>166</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, 311. Clowney, “The Final Temple,” 163 explicates, “Proud Israel was left a sanctuary without the Glory, but humbled Israel found a sanctuary in the Glory. Nothing in the further symbolism of Ezekiel’s prophecy surpasses the implications of this revelation. The indestructible temple is the presence of God in glory with his people.”

<sup>167</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, 306.



As previously discussed, the Lord promised David that it would be his son who would build the temple of the Lord.<sup>168</sup> Solomon was the direct fulfillment of this prophecy, but Jesus, the Davidic Shepherd, is the ultimate fulfillment and the temple that Jesus has built is unlike what his people would have imagined because he himself is the temple. It is crucial to understand that the Divine Davidic King Jesus is the *true* temple of God because this demonstrates how it is that his people can dwell with him forever. It is through his Divine intercession that his sheep have full access to their Shepherd for all time.

#### **4.4 – The Davidic Shepherd as Divine King in the New Jerusalem**

##### **4.4.1 – Royal Terminology in Ezekiel and Revelation**

Ezekiel, when describing the reign of the Davidic Servant, refers to him as a נָשִׂיא (“prince”). Ezekiel describes his reign over a single גֹּי (“nation”) and a single מְמַלְכָּה (“kingdom”) as Judah and Israel will be combined under the future Messiah. There has been debate over the use of נָשִׂיא instead of מֶלֶךְ. A few brief statements should help to clarify. Block asserts that a reference to nation as a גֹּי “is by definition ruled by a king, rather than an עַם, “people.” For the moment Ezekiel offers no hints of the king’s identity. He deals only with the issue of principle: a nation (גֹּי) is by definition a monarchy (מְמַלְכָּה), which must by definition be ruled by a royal figure, a מֶלֶךְ.”<sup>169</sup> By Ezekiel’s use of the word ‘גֹּי’ (i.e. “nation”) a monarchy is assumed. Renz concurs: “The designation עַם tends to emphasise the element of consanguinity, while the term גֹּי is generally used

<sup>168</sup> 2 Sam 7:11b–16. This promise, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, is where the figure of the Davidic Shepherd/King originates.

<sup>169</sup> Daniel I. Block, “Transformation of Royal Ideology in Ezekiel,” 239.

to describe a people in terms of its political and territorial affiliation.”<sup>170</sup> Duguid points out that Ezekiel also uses the term מְלִיכָא to describe the Davidic Servant and concludes that “the message Ezekiel is conveying here seems not to be that the future ruler will be a מְלִיכָא (as opposed to a מְלִיכָא) but rather that the future מְלִיכָא will not be like the rulers of the recent past.”<sup>171</sup> The use of מְלִיכָא instead of מְלִיכָא does not connote a limitation in authority but that the prince will realize that his authority comes from God.<sup>172</sup> As I have argued above, the prince is the Messiah Jesus who is also Divine. Therefore, the terminology could even hint at the relationship of God the Father to God the Son within the Trinity as the authority granted to Jesus to reign over true Israel is given by God the Father; this is further evidenced by the fact that the Lord declares in Ezekiel, “‘As I live,’ declares the Lord God, ‘surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you’” (20:33).<sup>173</sup> God the Father is declaring his kingship over Israel. Therefore, God the Father will be king as well as Jesus the Son, a phrase that sounds strikingly similar to “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb.” Ultimately, there will be only one King over them: the Divine Presence.

John uses royal terminology as well in Revelation with occasional allusions to the Davidic Shepherd.<sup>174</sup> The most common use of royal terminology is by the implication of

<sup>170</sup> Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 76 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 210.

<sup>171</sup> Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, 25.

<sup>172</sup> Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 301 connects the promise of the prince dwelling in their midst to the ensuing covenant formula through “the prepositional expression among them (bētōkām, lit. “in their midst”), which reminds the reader of an auxiliary affirmation often viewed as a part of the covenant formula, “I will dwell in your midst” (cf. Gen. 17:7; Exod. 29:45–46; Lev. 26:12–13; etc.). For Ezekiel, the prince is more than a political or military functionary, effecting the restoration; his role begins after the restoration has been achieved by God, at his initiative, and in his time. In short, he symbolizes the presence of Yahweh in the midst of his people.”

<sup>173</sup> Paul Joyce points this out in Joyce, “King and Messiah in Ezekiel,” 334.

<sup>174</sup> Though references to the Davidic Shepherd may only be occasional, I have already demonstrated that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic Shepherd and is the Divine Presence. As all of these royal appellations are being attributed to the Divine Presence they are, therefore, indirectly demonstrating what the role of the Davidic Shepherd has been expanded to entail in Revelation and in the New Jerusalem.

the Divine Presence as King through the symbol of the throne of God. John also uses royal terms with descriptions that he applies to Jesus. He informs us that “κύριος κυρίων ἐστὶν καὶ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων” (“he is Lord of lords and King of kings”) (Rev 17:14). Not only is Jesus declared to be Lord of lords and King of kings but John reveals, shortly after this, that written on Jesus’ robe and thigh is the name, “Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων” (“King of kings, and Lord of lords”) (Rev 19:16).<sup>175</sup> It is a statement that takes place directly after John’s allusion to the Davidic Shepherd in Rev 19:15. In following the allusion to Ezekiel with this statement, John, once again, adds new significance to the reign of the Davidic Shepherd. As Beale comments, “The name is taken from the LXX of Dan 4:37, where it is a title for God, and has already been applied to Christ in Rev 17:14.”<sup>176</sup> As the title for God has now been attributed to the Davidic Shepherd, it, therefore, not only depicts the Davidic Shepherd as the ultimate ruler but also demonstrates his divinity.

John’s use of royal terminology is further demonstrated by highlighting Jesus as king and that Jesus has made his people to be a kingdom of priests (Rev 1:6, 5:10). John further records, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever” (Rev 11:15). A similar statement about the kingdom is made in the ensuing chapter: “the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come” (Rev 12:10).<sup>177</sup> In the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb, God is declared “King of the Nations” (Rev 15:3). The declaration of God as King is in juxtaposition to the kings of the earth (Rev 1:5, 6:15, 17:2, 18, 18:3, 9, 19:19, 21:24)

---

<sup>175</sup> This statement takes place directly after John’s allusion the Davidic Shepherd in Rev 19:15.

<sup>176</sup> G.K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 963.

<sup>177</sup> The “authority of His Christ” also connects back to the role of the Davidic Shepherd as his authority is given to him by God (Ezek 34:23) but is not a demonstrable allusion.

and the kingdom of this world (Rev 11:15, 17:12) or of the beast (Rev 16:10, 17:17), each of which is depicted as a rival of God and all of which are allied with the throne of Satan, the beast, and the dragon (Rev 2:13, 13:2, 16:10). Their rivaling of God's Kingdom lasts until the final judgment comes and the New Jerusalem, with the Divine Presence as sole King, descends. With the coming of the King comes his fully inaugurated kingdom where his people serve him as his priests (Rev 1:6) without opposition or persecution. In fact, Mathewson states, "The presence of identical language in 1.6 establishes an *inclusio* with 22.3–5, demonstrating the importance of 22.3–5 as a climax to John's vision."<sup>178</sup> The kingdom has been anticipating her king and her hopes are finally realized as the throne of the Lord God Almighty and of the Lamb descends with the New Jerusalem. We now turn to look at this climactic shift.

#### 4.4.2 – Location Shift of the Throne

Along with the Divine Presence coming to dwell among his people comes his throne. The shift of the Divine Presence from dwelling in Heaven to coming out of Heaven, as the old Heaven and Earth pass away, to dwell in a freshly created city is a dramatic one. So, too, is the shift of the throne of the Lord. Ezekiel and John both begin, as previously examined, with visions of the throne early in their prophecies. Their final visions conclude with the throne of the Lord located among his people. I will examine these visions individually and then compare them.

Ezekiel's first vision sets the tone for the first forty-two chapters of the book: God is enthroned in glory in Heaven; He is the Divine Sovereign and it is from his throne that the Lord, through the Spirit, gives these visions to Ezekiel. The first two visions consist

---

<sup>178</sup> Mathewson, *A New Heaven and A New Earth*, 215.

of the Lord bringing judgment upon the Israelites for their abominations, especially when it comes to their desecration of the Temple. In the ensuing visions, the Lord, seated on his throne, then proceeds to judge the enemies of Israel such as Ammon, Edom, Moab, Tyre, and Egypt. These judgments are issued with the understanding that all kings and kingdoms fall under the jurisdiction of the true King. Ezekiel ascribes to this truth and his visions portray it; as evidenced by the fact that even a powerful kingdom such as Egypt can fall with just a few words from the Lord. The Lord is the omnipotent Judge seated on his throne, a throne which has an expanse beneath it or a “sea of glass” that keeps the wholly-other God separated. We must keep this in mind to understand the significance of the final vision.

Ezekiel records, in his concluding vision, “And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house” (43:5).<sup>179</sup> The glory of the Lord fills the temple<sup>180</sup> and then the Lord tells Ezekiel, “Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever” (43:7). It is remarkable that the Lord calls his dwelling here in this Temple both “My throne” and “the place of the soles of My feet.”<sup>181</sup> I will show the history of the latter first before showing the uniqueness of the former.

“The place of the soles of My feet” is what we would expect the Lord to say in reference to the Temple. This expectation comes from the fact that it is a phrase that certainly would have fit in a description of the Solomonic Temple. The Solomonic

---

<sup>179</sup> It is tangential, but observe that the Spirit, yet again, is the one responsible for Ezekiel’s ability to see this vision unfold.

<sup>180</sup> Ezekiel only refers to the temple as בית and, therefore, some translations read “house” instead of “temple”.

<sup>181</sup> Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Message of Ezekiel: A New Heart and a New Spirit*, BST (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 334n35 suggests that metonymy is in play as the Lord is depicted sitting on His throne with his kingly footstool, thus it signals “Yahweh reigning as king.”

Temple could be referred to as such because it contained the “footstool of the Lord,” which was a title given to the Ark of the Covenant.<sup>182</sup> The Hebrew word combination of סִדָּן (“stool” or “footstool”) and רֶגֶל (“foot”), which is used to describe the Ark and is translated “footstool,” is only used six times<sup>183</sup> in the OT and is always in reference to the footstool of a throne. Stuart notes that “it was more likely a pedestal or standing platform than a seat, a reflection of the dazzling slab that appeared under the feet of Yahweh when the elders saw him on Mount Sinai (24:10) – not a throne or chair or the like.”<sup>184</sup> The location of the “dazzling slab” that Stuart mentions being described as “וַתַּסֵּת רֶגְלָיו” (under his feet) gives further credence to the argument that the Ark is meant to be viewed not as a throne for the Lord to reign from but a footstool for his throne, which is in Heaven. Moses is commanded to construct statues of cherubim on top of the Ark with the mercy seat in between them. The wings of the cherubim are to cover the mercy seat (Exod 25:17–21). The Lord tells Moses, “And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel” (Exod 25:22). Later in the history of Israel, the Lord will often be described as “enthroned between the cherubim,”<sup>185</sup> the derivation of which is from the design and construction of the Ark of the Covenant.<sup>186</sup> The Ark of the Covenant is the footstool of

---

<sup>182</sup> Ps 132:7; 1 Chr 28:2, where the *waw* (in red) connecting “לְאַרְוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה” to “וְלִסְדָּן רֶגְלָיו אֱלֹהֵינוּ” should be translated as a *waw explicativum* so that in English it is: “the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that is the footstool of our God.”

<sup>183</sup> 1 Chr 28:2; Ps 99:5, 110:1, 132:7; Isa 66:1; Lam 2:1. The word סִדָּן (“footstool”) is used once in the OT, 2 Chr 9:18, and is in reference to the footstool of a king as well; the footstool mentioned in 2 Chr 9:18 is attached to the throne of Solomon and, as Beale, *The Temple*, 139 points out, “was modelled after the idea that the ark was the footstool of God’s throne in heaven.”

<sup>184</sup> Stuart, *Exodus*, 570.

<sup>185</sup> 1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 6:2; 2 Kgs 19:15; 1 Chr 13:6; Ps 80:1, 99:1; Isa 37:16.

<sup>186</sup> I write this understanding Doug Stuart’s argument that “enthroned” does not derive from a literal rendering of the Hebrew but rather an interpretive one. For most of these verses, the NASB, NIV, ESV, and NRSV all translate the Hebrew interpretively with “enthroned,” which is the correct translation as long as

the Lord and, by extension, the earth is as well; as Isaiah informs us, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool.’” (Isa 66:1). The Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies is the first connection, post-Eden, of God’s throne extending to earth. It is only fitting, then, that this phrase is recalled<sup>187</sup> at the time when God’s throne comes to earth in full.

Outside of the Book of Revelation, the throne of God is referred to 27 times in Scripture.<sup>188</sup> In all but four of those occurrences, it is located in Heaven.<sup>189</sup> The first of the four outside of Heaven is found early on in Jeremiah: “At that time they will call Jerusalem ‘The Throne of the LORD,’ and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance” (3:17–18). Notice the parallels to Ezekiel and Revelation: Judah and Israel will be united under one ruler, which is similar to Ezek 37, and all of the nations will be gathered to Jerusalem, which is similar to Rev 7:9, 15:4, and 21:4. Jeremiah is speaking of the eschaton. The next appearance of the throne being spoken of as outside of Heaven comes at the end of Jeremiah: “Then I shall set My throne in Elam, And I shall

---

one understands that it is not an implication that the Lord is enthroned on the ‘mercy seat’ but is over or above the mercy seat, reigning from Heaven, and treating the mercy seat, and the Ark of the Covenant as a whole, as a footstool. See Stuart, *Exodus*, 570n341.

<sup>187</sup> The phrase and not the Ark of the Covenant itself as the word of the Lord through Jeremiah has come true: “And it shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land,” declares the LORD, “they shall say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ And it shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they miss it, nor shall it be made again” (Jer 3:16).

<sup>188</sup> 1 Kgs 22:19; 1 Chr 29:23; 2 Chr 9:8; 18:18; Ps 11:4; 45:6; 47:8; 89:14; 93:2; 97:2; 103:19; Isa 6:1; 66:1; Jer 3:17; 49:38; Lam 5:19; Dan 7:9; Zech 6:13; Matt 5:34; 19:28; 23:22; 25:31; Luke 1:32; Acts 7:49; Heb 4:16; 8:1; 12:2

<sup>189</sup> The throne of God is specifically mentioned as being in Heaven in the following locations: 1 Kgs 22:19; 2 Chron 18:18; Ps 11:4; 103:19; Matt 5:34; 23:22; Acts 7:49; Heb 8:1. In the other references, although Heaven is not specifically mentioned, no location change has been implied. Revelation will be examined separately.

destroy out of it king and princes,' declares the LORD" (49:38). By the judgment terminology used here and surrounding this chapter,<sup>190</sup> we can conclude that the Lord is declaring not that Elam is the place from which he will choose to reign but that the throne of Elam will be occupied by one whom the Lord chooses. It is similar in meaning to the third appearance of the throne being spoken of outside of Heaven, which occurs when Solomon is declared to be sitting on the "throne of the Lord" (1 Chr 29:23). Solomon was chosen by the Lord to sit on the throne, hence, it is the "throne of the Lord" because the Lord is the one who dictates who sits on it. The same is true for Elam. Therefore, the reference to the throne of God in Jer 49 has no bearing on our study as the throne has not been relocated.<sup>191</sup> The final occurrence is the verse discussed above, Ezek 43:7: "He said to me, 'Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever.'" As in the Jer 3:17 reference, the Lord is speaking of relocating his royal throne among his people. Heaven, which was formerly called his throne as mentioned above, and earth, which was formerly only referred to as his footstool, have been combined in this statement. Now his throne and footstool are in the same location. Heaven was formerly defined as "the place where God dwelt" and that is no longer the case. Heaven and earth have been collapsed and are now found to be located in this holy city in Ezekiel's vision. The Lord places his throne within the temple that Ezekiel has just toured. It is a dramatic shift that is being discussed here, one that is spoken of only twice in Scripture outside of the last two chapters of Revelation. We will now turn to John's similar description.

---

<sup>190</sup> Jer 44–52 contain judgments on Egypt and Pharaoh, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar and Hazor, Elam, and Babylon.

<sup>191</sup> The reference in 1 Chr 29:23, however, maintains significance for this study and it will be discussed in section 4.4.7.



I have already discussed the frequency with which John refers to the throne of God in Revelation. Where Ezekiel discusses the throne of God from the outset and leaves it implied in the rest of his visions until the final prophecy, John continues to bring us back before the throne of the Lord. In the section leading up to the New Jerusalem coming down from Heaven, we see the relocation of the throne begin. John sees the throne and Heaven and earth flee at its sight (Rev 20:11). The throne was formerly in the temple of God in Heaven, as John describes: “For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tabernacle over them” (Rev 7:15). The Lord brings forth his throne, first, to judge creation (Rev 20:11–15), and then to dwell among his people forever as we see in the concluding chapters of the Apocalypse.

As the Presence of God comes to dwell among his people forever, similar to Ezekiel’s prophecy, John is shown the holy city in all of its resplendent glory. He then records, “Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street” (Rev 22:1–2a). The throne of God is now called the throne of God and of the Lamb: God the Father and God the Son reign together in the center of the New Jerusalem. All of creation, all whose names were in the Lamb’s book of life, now dwells in this new creation. As heaven and earth were collapsed in Ezek 43:7, when the Lord told Ezekiel that his throne and footstool would both be located in the holy city, so, too, heaven and earth have been done away with here. All that remains is the city of God with the relocated throne at its center so that he may dwell among his people forever.

#### 4.4.3 – The Throne Room

The location shift of the throne of the Lord brings with it a major implication as to the function of the city. Not only does the city serve as the eternal dwelling place of God with his people forever and as a temple-like structure, since the whole city now houses the Divine Presence, but, because the throne of the Lord now dwells in the city, the city itself has also become the throne room of the King of kings. The possible implication here is that the things that formerly surrounded the throne of the Lord may now help to comprise the city. I will discuss two feasible options below.

John describes the city as “pure gold, like clear glass” (Rev 21:18). In addition, “the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass” (Rev 21:21). This clear or transparent glass recalls the crystal clear glass that is under the throne in Rev 4.<sup>192</sup> John chooses another word for glass, here, but the two are almost identical: ὑάλινος (Rev 4:6) v. ὕαλος (Rev 21:18, 21). The emphasis with the use of ὕαλος in v.18 and v.21 is transparency.<sup>193</sup> The use of ὑάλινος in 4:6 seems to connote the same.<sup>194</sup> The variance in wording may be due to John’s desire to show the New Jerusalem as something new and different from what came before. However, the implication remains, even in the description of the walls and streets, that the separation of humanity and God is no more. God has brought the throne down and humanity to him, through Jesus Christ the Lord. Now, what formerly divided humanity from the throne comprises the streets and walls; in other words, it now secures mankind to be near the throne forever.

---

<sup>192</sup> Rev 4:6. As aforementioned, Ezekiel calls this an “expanse” but describes it in a way very similar to John’s “sea of glass.” See Ezek 1:22–26.

<sup>193</sup> BDAG, s.v. ὕαλος.

<sup>194</sup> Especially since this “sea of glass” is described by Ezekiel, whose vantage point is from below, as an “expanse” but it does not prevent him from seeing and further describing the throne from which the “expanse” separates him. See Ezek 1:26–28.

Further evidence of what divided now being used to draw his people near is seen in Rev 15:2, the only other location of ὑάλινος in the entire Bible, when John documents, “And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God” (Rev 15:2). Those marked with the Name of God on their foreheads are standing before his throne on the sea of glass, Ezekiel’s “expanse”, which formerly separated humanity from God, and holding harps, which they will likely use in worship of God. What held them off is now used to draw them near or, perhaps a better way of stating it, what protected them from the holiness of the Lord can now be used to secure them close to the holiness of the Lord, now that they themselves have been made holy through the blood of the Lamb (Rev 12:11). If the people of God are standing on the “sea of glass” in Rev 15, then it is not a far stretch to connect the walls and, particularly, the streets of the New Jerusalem as functional for a similar use, especially since the throne of God dwells in the city and the city itself serves as its throne room.

Another option, and it may be that the two are not mutually exclusive, when looking at the “sea of glass like crystal” in Rev 4:6 is to connect it to the “river of life bright as crystal” in 22:1. The shift is readily discernible as the sea, which surrounded the throne and he who is eternal, has become a river, or, better yet, has been recreated into a river that flows from the throne and grants life to all who drink of it and brings healing through the leaves of the trees that are sustained by it. It also could just be that John prefers to use a comparison to crystal to describe clear water. The connection to the throne, however, leads us to conclude the former. The combination of this option with the

one above is simple in that both depict what formerly separated humanity from the Lord (i.e. “the sea of glass like crystal”) as comprising the elements that are now embedded in the fabric of the city structure itself; not only that, but they now help to secure humanity’s position as dwelling with the Lord forever.

#### 4.4.4 – The Throne and the Temple are One

We have seen that, in Ezek 43, the Lord speaks from the temple and tells Ezekiel, “Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever” (43:7). The temple and the throne have the same location. Previously, the footstool of the Lord was in the Holy of Holies. Now the throne of the Lord will be located within the temple.

John records, regarding the New Jerusalem, “And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple” (Rev 21:22). As I discussed above, Jesus is the true temple and the city itself is cubic in form, which hints at its being the equivalent of the Holy of Holies. A few verses later, John writes, “And the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his bond-servants shall serve him” (Rev 22:3b). The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb both function as the temple and sit on the throne. In fact, it is the work of Christ that has allowed for this to happen: as Jesus brings the *true* temple before the people of God, he brings the people of God before the throne. The temple and the throne have become one. The implication of this is that where God fully resides in his holiness, he fully reigns in his sovereignty. Both the full holiness of the Lord and the full sovereignty of the Lord are displayed in one location for all of his

people to see, the glory of which will light the entire city to the point that there is no need for a sun or moon and there will be no night (Rev 21:23, 22:5).<sup>195</sup>

#### 4.4.5 – The River of Life Flowing from the Temple and Throne

The last allusion that John makes to Ezekiel concerns the throne and the river of life. John describes this water of life: “And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Rev 22:1–2).<sup>196</sup> Ezekiel describes a similar river flowing out of the temple (the location of the throne in his vision). Ezekiel recounts, “Then he said to me, “These waters go out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah; then they go toward the sea, being made to flow into the sea, and the waters of the sea become fresh. And it will come about that every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live. And there will be very many fish, for these waters go there, and the others become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes” (47:8–9). Ezekiel also records, “By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing” (47:12). John is making a *clear allusion* to Ezekiel as both

---

<sup>195</sup> The radiating light coming from the Glory of God is also described by Ezekiel when he sees the Glory of God coming from the east, “and the earth shone with His glory” (Ezek 43:2).

<sup>196</sup> We argued previously that the reference “clear as crystal” may connect the fabric of the city with the sea of glass that formerly surrounded the throne as the city itself is the throne room of the Lord.

accounts declare the river to be characterized by its life-giving nature and to be flowing out of the temple/throne of the Lord for the healing of all who partake.

The fact that the water flows from the throne of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, and from the throne within the temple in Ezekiel's vision, promotes the idea that the fully inaugurated reign of the Lord brings restoration to his creation. God promised through Ezekiel that he would provide and care for his flock (Ezek 34:11–15) and that the Davidic Shepherd would do the same (Ezek 34:23). Now, as the Lord God Almighty and the Divine Davidic King reign side-by-side, we see that promise come to its fullest fruition through their providing for, and restoration of, all of creation. He has set the κόσμος back in its proper order.<sup>197</sup> It is an order that Creation has strived and longed for since Eden because it was designed to be under the fully inaugurated reign of God with his kingdom of priests serving him. Ezekiel anticipates this vision in part and John, building off of Ezekiel's foundation, develops this vision in full: the Divine Presence dwelling among all of existence and fully reigning over all of existence as her only true King.

#### 4.4.6 – The Davidic Shepherd on the Throne of the Lord in the New Jerusalem

In section 4.4.2, I mentioned Solomon's throne being described as the “throne of the Lord” (1 Chr 29:23). In context, it is only described as such because it shows that the one who rules as king in Judah does so only by the Lord's will. As I have demonstrated, however, in an unexpected twist, the Davidic Shepherd, the Son of David, turns out to be the Lord Jesus. Therefore, the “throne of the Lord” is an accurate term for the throne of

---

<sup>197</sup> The original meaning of the word was an “ordered world.” See BDAG, s.v. κόσμος.

David because Jesus, the one who reigns forever on the Davidic throne, is both the Son of David and the Son of God.

Jesus rules from the Davidic throne, and it is this very throne that he promises to share with those who overcome: “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Rev 3:21). Through his perfect life, death, and resurrection, Jesus has made it possible for his people to take their place as vice-regents of the Lord. In the process of Jesus restoring his people to this position, he himself has overcome and sat down on the throne of the Lord God Almighty to reign forevermore. And so we see that it is the Davidic Shepherd, Jesus, who is ruling alongside the Lord God Almighty as Divine King in the New Jerusalem.

#### **4.5 – Summary and Conclusions**

I have examined the Divine King in the New Jerusalem throughout this chapter. As I have demonstrated previously, the Divine King is none other than Jesus the Davidic Shepherd. The significance of this chapter to my overall thesis lies in the development of what the city and reign of the Divine Davidic King will look like. I have demonstrated how Ezekiel and John have significant overlap in their descriptions of the eschatological holy city and how John, as is the case throughout Revelation, frequently alludes to Ezekiel (among other OT prophets). The New Jerusalem is a city unlike any other as within it the Divine Presence dwells among his creation. In a surprising turn of events, the Divine Presence acts as the temple in the city as it is Jesus who brings the *true* temple to the people of God and, in doing so, brings the people of God before the everlasting throne. The Lord calls the eschatological temple the place for his throne and his footstool

(Ezek 43:7), which are representative of Heaven and Earth; meaning that all of existence is now located within this everlasting city. I have examined the royal terminology found in both Ezekiel and Revelation; including the possibility of an *inclusio* concerning this royal language at the beginning of the book and finding its counterpart in the book's climactic end. The Divine Presence is King in the New Jerusalem, which is the new location of his throne and serves as his ultimate throne room, and the fabric of the city may even be composed of that which formerly isolated God's throne now being used to secure the dwelling of his people among him. I have also demonstrated that the throne and the temple are one and that, with the throne at the center of the city, the city and its main waterway are characterized by life and life-giving elements due to the giver of all life restoring it to proper order, which is an order that comes with his fully implemented reign. I have also demonstrated that the Davidic throne, formerly referred to as the "throne of the Lord" but only in reference to the Lord being sovereign over the king of Judah, has now truly become the "throne of the Lord" as Jesus, the Lord and Davidic Shepherd, reigns on the throne forevermore.



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION:

### THE DAVIDIC SHEPHERD AS DIVINE KING IN THE NEW JERUSALEM

The Davidic Shepherd is Divine King in the New Jerusalem. John's rich portrayal of the kingship of God, as I have demonstrated, is greatly influenced and enhanced by his use of Ezekiel. The Book of Ezekiel is permeated with kingship of God imagery, even demonstrating overlap between the Davidic Shepherd and the Lord God in this display of kingship. The clearest images of the Divine Presence as King in Ezekiel are the vision of the enthroned Lord, which Ezekiel sees in his first vision (1:4–28), and the Lord's assertion that the temple will serve as the location of his throne and footstool (43:7), which Ezekiel learns in his last vision. Not coincidentally, John, in Revelation, discusses the throne of God from start (1:4) to finish (22:3). The frequency of the theme of kingship in John is developed by it being the overarching theme of Ezekiel. As John is in the habit of doing, based on seeing himself in the line of the prophets and as the culmination of prophecy, he adds significance to the meaning embedded in Ezekiel's Davidic Shepherd. The Davidic Shepherd is now seen to be Divine through his being located in Jesus who is Divine. As both Ezekiel and John conclude their visions with the Divine Presence dwelling among his people and reigning over the everlasting holy city we see that the Davidic Shepherd, Jesus, has become the Divine King over all of creation.

I will now provide a chapter-by-chapter summary before drawing my final conclusions.

#### **5.1 A Chapter by Chapter Summary of this Thesis**

In Chapter 1, I discussed the scholarship that has pored over John's use of the OT in Revelation. I stated that I see John as interpreting Ezekiel in light of Jesus Christ and

his resurrection. It is not that John changes the meaning of Ezekiel when he applies it in Revelation but that he is giving that meaning new significance; this is due to *sensus plenior*.

I also reviewed the commonalities between Ezekiel and John and their prophetic self-identities. They are unique in that Ezekiel and John are the only two prophets called to prophesy while in exile. Each is representative of the larger exile of the people of God going on at the time. Ezekiel's brethren are in exile due to their unfaithfulness to God, evidenced by their disobedience to and blatant ignoring of the Mosaic Covenant. John's people are the followers of the Way who live under the persecution of the Roman Empire. Their true citizenship is in Heaven. Whereas Ezekiel's people identified with one another ethnically, John's people are of multiple ethnicities but citizens of the same kingdom: the Kingdom of God. John and Ezekiel also have similar call stories, with each being ordered to consume a writing from the Lord (Ezek 3:1; Rev 10:8–10) and speak to the people on behalf of the Lord. The final visions of Ezekiel and John also unite them as both describe an eschatological holy city where the Divine Presence dwells and reigns among his people forever.

In Chapter 2, I discussed Ezekiel's view of the Davidic Shepherd and the influences of Gen 49:10 and 2 Sam 7 on his view. As John was influenced by Scripture, so too was Ezekiel. Ezekiel's description of the Davidic Shepherd will later be interpreted by John and the contemporaries of his day to be messianic. Jesus himself attests to being the Davidic Shepherd and the Messiah, locating both images within his own person. John follows Jesus in this attribution.

I also discussed Jesus as the Divine Presence, meaning that the Divine Presence is fully present within Jesus. Interpreting Ezekiel in light of Christ allows one to see connections in Ezekiel that Ezekiel himself would not have made. Jesus proclaims his own divinity by setting himself equal to God and forgiving sin. John shows Jesus to be the Divine Presence by using allusions to Ezekiel's description of God on the throne but applying them to Jesus. Therefore, both Jesus and John saw Jesus as Divine, which means that the Davidic Shepherd is Divine as well.

In Chapter 3, I evaluated the Divine Presence as King in the visions of Ezekiel and John leading up to their final visions. I first examined the influence of Exodus on Ezekiel in his portrayal of God as King. This investigation was followed by looking at the influence of Ezekiel in John's portrayal of the Divine Presence. John alludes to Ezekiel to enrich his description of God on the throne, an image kept front-and-center throughout Revelation. John then alludes to Ezekiel when the Divine King, before judging the nations opposed to his reign, marks the foreheads of his faithful subjects and, by so doing, shows his grace and justice by not including them in with the objects of his wrath. He does bring his judgment on the nations who oppose his kingdom and makes this clear with the language that he uses to prescribe the judgment upon each; both Ezekiel and John make the reasons for his judgment clear. The fiercest rivals of the Lord (in terms of vehemence not strength, as none compares to the omnipotence of the Lord) are found in Gog and Magog whom Ezekiel and John, alluding to Ezekiel, both discuss. They come in the final battle against the Lord. The battle is over quickly as Gog and Magog are defeated and all remaining opposition to the Kingdom of God with them. With the

judgment and end of evil, the groundwork is now laid for the Kingdom of God to come in full.

In Chapter 4, I discussed the Divine Presence as King in the New Jerusalem. I first surveyed the relationship between Ezek 40–48 and Rev 21–22, demonstrating that a clear link exists between the two. In fact, John’s structure is seen as overtly parallel to Ezekiel’s in their concluding visions. It is with the coming of the New Jerusalem that the Divine Presence comes as King to dwell among his subjects forever. The Divine King is also shown to be specific in how he orders his city, who he allows in it by judging as to which sheep are his, and his holiness in the midst of them, functioning as their temple, which the ultimate fulfillment of the promise given to David. I also observe that it is Jesus who brings the *true* temple, himself, to the people of God and, in so doing, brings the people of God before the everlasting throne.

I then move from the city to describing the throne of God and his kingship. I discuss the royal terminology employed by both Ezekiel and John. John occasionally uses royal appellations to further his portrayal of the Davidic Shepherd. Also within John’s use of royal language may be located an *inclusio*, which stretches the length of the Apocalypse, from the beginning where the throne of God is located in Heaven to the end where God reigns among his people. I have also shown that the New Jerusalem serves as the ultimate throne room for the Lord as his throne has been relocated to the center of the holy city. The city itself, as the throne room, may be made up of elements that formerly surrounded the throne such as the “sea of glass” (Rev 4:6). The throne and the temple are one in the new city with the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb serving as the temple (Rev 21:22) and sitting on the throne (22:1,3); this aligns well with Ezekiel where the

Lord calls the temple the location for his throne and footstool (43:7). From the throne pours forth the River of Life, which is characterized by its healing powers. It is symbolic of the restored order and life that comes with the Divine Presence dwelling and reigning among his people. The restoration brought by the River of Life and throne is the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise in Ezek 34 to provide for his flock. In the last section of the chapter, I discuss how the Davidic throne has truly become the throne of the Lord as the Lord God Almighty and Jesus, the Davidic Shepherd, reign on the throne in the New Jerusalem.

## **5.2 Implications**

I argue in this thesis that the Davidic Shepherd is demonstrated by John to be the Divine King in the New Jerusalem. I have shown this, first, by demonstrating how John sees Jesus as the fulfillment of the promised Davidic Shepherd, the promised Messiah, and as the Divine Presence. I then argued that John alludes to Ezekiel time and time again to develop the portrait of the Divine Presence as King; this allows one to conclude that the Davidic Shepherd is, in actuality, the Divine King. John sketches this portrait by alluding to Ezekiel's visions of the throne, of judgment of the nations (including preservation of the faithful through marking their foreheads), of punishment and lament, and of the final battle with Gog and Magog, all of which take place before the final visions of either prophet. When it comes to the final visions of both Ezekiel and John, we see the Divine King coming down to reign in the New Jerusalem. The city reflects the glory of the Divine King and becomes His throne room as the throne is setup in the center of it. He is its true and only temple. He is its true and only light. He is its true and only

king. It is with the final visions that we see the climactic culmination of the Kingdom come. The implications from this study are manifold.

First, Ezekiel and John have similar prophetic identities. They are the only two prophets called to prophesy while in exile. Their visions are Spirit-led and saturated in biblical theology. The overlap between the two is made most evident in that both are given written documents from the Lord to consume. This implies that the words that they speak, they speak from the Lord, which is made further evident by the fact that Ezekiel could speak no other words from the time that he consumed the scroll until the destruction of Jerusalem and the fact that John entitles his vision, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Second, John intentionally alludes to Ezekiel to demonstrate that the promised Davidic Shepherd is fulfilled by Jesus. After demonstrating that Jesus is the Divine King, John depicts the Davidic Shepherd as far more than Ezekiel would have imagined: the Davidic Shepherd is the Divine King.

Third, the Divine King’s judgment is due to the attempted rivaling of his kingdom. It is made explicit that the Lord brings his judgment on the nations for their opposition to his kingship in Ezekiel when the King of Tyre, who claims to be a god, and Pharaoh, who claims to be the creator god of the Nile, are both judged. These pride-ridden kings who attempt to claim divinity are no match for the one true God-King. The same judgment is exacted in Revelation for those kings of the earth who oppose the Lord and unite themselves, instead, to the rival throne of Satan and the Beast.

Fourth, the mercy and grace of the Divine King is issued to those who are faithful. They are marked with his name. Both Ezekiel and John, unique among other prophets,

witness the Lord marking out his people by writing on their foreheads. The only other time in Scripture where something is written on a forehead is the inscription on the plate for the turban of the High Priest, which reads, “Holy to the Lord” (Exod 28:36–38). It is for the sake of his name, a phrase located mainly in Ezekiel and observed in Revelation, that the Lord withholds his judgment.

Fourth, the Divine Davidic King is the temple. As Rev 21:22 makes clear, the true temple is located in the Divine Presence. Only in him, through the work of Jesus Christ, by the will of God the Father, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, can one have access to true forgiveness, true worship, and unhindered access to the Presence of God. Christ has fulfilled the need for a temple and, therefore, John’s vision of the eschatological city does not rely on one as the final vision of Ezekiel did. It is through the Divine Presence being the temple for his people that they are able to dwell with him in the New Jerusalem with unrestricted access.

Fifth, the New Jerusalem is the Holy of Holies. The people of the gold-laden cubic city have the name of the Lord on their foreheads, like the High Priest, and serve before the Lord’s Presence forever as the Kingdom of priests, which is what Christ has made them.

Sixth, the coming of the Divine King’s throne brings with it the vanquishing of all enemies. No other kingdom can exist but the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. Therefore, any opposition is not allowed to exist. King David was known for vanquishing his foes, but the Divine Davidic King will vanquish all foes forever and is proclaimed “King of kings” and “Lord of lords.” And with his coming, we see the restoration of Creation as it was intended, and the life-giving, eternally-reigning, Divine King seated on

his throne. Another implication of this is that the city itself reflects the former throne room, as the New Jerusalem is now the everlasting throne room of the Lord.

Seventh, when the Lord tells Ezekiel that the eschatological temple will be the location of both his throne and his footstool, he is combining what formerly represented Heaven and Earth. All of existence is now located within this city. The same is evident in John when Heaven and Earth flee as the throne of the Divine King appears. In an unforeseen twist, instead of the Davidic King reigning just over the Promised Land, he rules over all of existence for all of time. For all time, he lovingly shepherds and cares for multitudes from every nation who put their trust in Him.

Eighth, John's portrayal of the Divine Presence as King in the New Jerusalem would not be the same without his allusions to Ezekiel. These allusions help John to add meaning, color, and theological continuity and richness to the portrait that he paints while also adding significance to the Ezekielian texts themselves.

Finally, the prevalent theme in Ezekiel is the kingship of God and the dominant symbol of Revelation is the throne of God; this is not a coincidence when one examines the relationship of John to Ezekiel and the context of exile from which each prophesied.

Both Ezekiel and John prophesied in a time of great turmoil, not unlike the Church today. They encouraged the faithful to remain so by understanding that the kingdoms of this world will all pass away and that the Sovereign Lord Jesus is working out his will throughout history and in our midst. As the Good Shepherd, he knows those who are his and he will judge those who oppose his reign, while honoring those who are persecuted for the sake of his name.



The Davidic Shepherd is the Divine King, whether the kingdoms of this world have yet to acknowledge it or not. He is not dependent on time but he only awaits the right time. And when his kingdom does come, we will, then and only then, fully understand what it means to be dwelling in an everlasting holy city known as “The Lord is There.”

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, Leslie. *Ezekiel*. WBC. 2 vols. Dallas, Word Books, 1990–94.
- Aune, David E. *Revelation*. WBC. 3 vols. Dallas, Word Books, 1997.
- Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1993.
- Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, and Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Beale, G.K. "A Response to Jon Paulien on the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *AUSS* 39 [2001]: 22–33.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*. JSNTSup 166. Edited by Stanley E. Porter. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Questions of Authorial Intent, Epistemology, and Presuppositions and Their Bearing on the Study of the Old Testament in the New: A Rejoinder to Steve Moyise," *IBS* 21 [1999]: 151–180.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Book of Revelation*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Solecisms in the Apocalypse as Signals for the Presence of Old Testament Allusions: A Selective Analysis of Revelation 1–22." Pages 420–446 in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, JSNTSup 148. Edited by Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders. Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*. Edited by D.A. Carson. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
- Beale, G.K. and Sean McDonough, "Revelation." Pages 1081–1161 in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Edited by G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Ezekiel*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990.
- Block, Daniel I. *Beyond the River Chebar: Studies in Kingship and Eschatology in the Book of Ezekiel*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2013.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Bringing Back David: Ezekiel's Messianic Hope." Pages 167–188 in *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*. Edited by Philip E. Satterthwaite, Richard S. Hess, Gordon J. Wenham. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ezekiel*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997–98.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Transformation of Royal Ideology in Ezekiel." Pages 208–246 in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel*. PTMS 127. Edited by William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons. Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010.

Brown, Francis, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, [1906]. Reprint, [2010].

Clowney, Edmund P. "The Final Temple." *WTJ* 35 (1972): 156–189.

"Code of Hammurabi." Translated by L.W. King. (1915). <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/ham/ham08.htm>.

Cooper Sr., Lamar Eugene. *Ezekiel*. NAC. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.

Craigie, Peter C. *Ezekiel*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983.

Duguid, Iain M. *Ezekiel*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*. VTSup 56. Leiden: Brill, 1994.

Dumbrell, William J. *The End of the Beginning*. Homebush West, Australia: Lancer, 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Search for Order: Biblical Eschatology in Focus*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.

Fekkes III, Jan. *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and their Development*, JSNT 93. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.

Goulder, M.D. "The Apocalypse as an Annual Cycle of Prophecies," *NTS* 27 (1981): 342–67.

Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel*. ABC. 2 vols. Garden City: Doubleday, 1983.

Hays, Richard B. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

- Holladay, William L., ed. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Jenkins, Ferrell. *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972.
- Joyce, Paul. "King and Messiah in Ezekiel." Pages 323–337 in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. JSOTSup 270. Edited by John Day. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998.
- Koester, C. R. *The Dwelling of God*. CBQMS 22. Washington D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1989.
- Köstenberger, Andreas. "John." Pages 415–512 in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Edited by G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Kowalski, Beate. "Transformation of Ezekiel in John's Revelation." Pages 279–307 in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel*. PTMS 127. Edited by William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons. Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010.
- Lee, Pilchan. *The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation: A Study of Revelation 21–22 in the Light of its Background in Jewish Tradition*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.
- Levenson, J.D. *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48*. HSM 10. Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976.
- Longenecker, Richard N. *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Mathews, Danny. *Royal Motifs in the Pentateuchal Portrayal of Moses*. LHBOTS 571. New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2012), 54.
- Mathewson, David. *A New Heaven and a New Earth: The Meaning and Function of the Old Testament in Revelation 21.1–22.5*. JSNTSup 238. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003.
- Moyise, Steve. "The Old Testament in the New: A Reply to Greg Beale." *IBS* 21 (May 1999): 54–58.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation*. JSNTSup 115. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.
- Odell, Margaret S. *Ezekiel*. Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005.

- Osborne, Grant R. *Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Paulien, Jon. "Dreading the Whirlwind: Intertextuality and the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *AUSS* 39 [2001]: 5–22.
- Petter, D.L. *Ezekiel and Mesopotamian City Laments*. PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2009.
- Porter, Stanley. "The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament: A Brief Comment on Method and Terminology." Pages 79–96 in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, JSNTSup 148. Edited by Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders. Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1997.
- Renz, Thomas. *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel*. VTSup 76. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
- Rowland, Christopher. "Christ in the New Testament." Pages 474–496 in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. JSOTSup 270. Edited by John Day. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998.
- Ruiz, Jean-Pierre. *Ezekiel in the Apocalypse: The Transformation of Prophetic Language in Revelation 16:17–19:10*. European University Studies 23. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989.
- Schibler, Daniel. "Messianism and Messianic Prophecy in Isaiah 1–12 and 28–33." Pages 87–104 in *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*. Edited by Philip E. Satterthwaite, Richard S. Hess, and Gordon J. Wenham. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1996.
- Stuart, Douglas. *Exodus*. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ezekiel*. Edited by Lloyd J. Ogilvie. Dallas: Word Book Publishers, 1979.
- Sweeney, Matthew A. "The Problem of Ezekiel in Talmudic Literature." Pages 11–23 in *After Ezekiel: The Reception of A Difficult Prophet*. LHBOTS 535. Edited by Andrew Mein and Paul M. Joyce. New York: T & T Clark International, 2011.
- Tuell, Steven Shawn. *The Law of the Temple in Ezekiel 40–48*. HSM 49. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992.
- Vogelgesang, J.M. "The Interpretation of Ezekiel in the Book of Revelation." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1985.
- Walker, P.W.L. *Jesus and the Holy City*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.

Wenham, Gordon J. *Numbers: An Introduction & Commentary*. Edited by D.J. Wiseman. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981.

Wright, Christopher J.H. *The Message of Ezekiel: A New Heart and a New Spirit*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001.

Wright, N.T. *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.

Zimmerli, W. *Ezekiel*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979–83.

## VITA

The author of this work is Aaron Joseph Osterbrock. Born September 10, 1982, in Cincinnati, Ohio, he was raised in Milford, a suburb of Cincinnati, where he attended Milford Public Schools. After graduating from Milford High School, he went on to study at the University of Cincinnati where he received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Information Systems and Digital Business. After working for five years as a Master Planner and Scheduler at a manufacturing plant in northern Kentucky, he enrolled at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Gordon-Conwell proved to be a major turning-point in Mr. Osterbrock's life as it was at the seminary that he received the Lord's call to theological education in a majority-world context. Shortly after discerning this call, he married Valerie Ting (a Gordon-Conwell student with a similar call). The two completed the full seminary experience by the arrival of their son, Theophilus, before finishing their studies at Gordon-Conwell. Mr. Osterbrock will graduate in October, 2016.

Mr. Osterbrock, an ordained American Baptist pastor, currently lives in Hamilton, Ohio where he serves as associate pastor at First Baptist Church of Hamilton. The Osterbrocks are also in conversation with International Ministries as to where the Lord may be sending them next.

Mr. Osterbrock considers himself to be a turtle on a fencepost. In other words, he knows that he did not get to where he is at by himself. It is only by the grace of God and through the loving and faithful support of many Gordon-Conwell faculty, a handful of churches, and numerous friends & family members that he has made it thus far in his journey. All thanks be to them and all glory be to God.